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THE PLAYS

OF

WILLIAM SHAKSPEARE.

WITH

NOTES,

BY

JOHNSON AND STEEVENS.

VOL. XV.

HAMLET,

TIMON OF ATHENS.

PHILADELPHIA:

PUBLISHED BY J. MORGAN AND T. S. MANNING.

1809.

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HAMLET.

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HAMLET,

THE original story on which this play is built, may be found in Saxo Grammaticus, the Danish historian. From thence Belleforest adopted it in his collection of novels, in seven volumes, which he began in 1564, and continued to publish through succeeding years. From this work, *The Hystorie of Hamblett*, quarto, bl. l. was translated. I have hitherto met with no earlier edition of the play than one in the year 1604, though it must have been performed before that time, as I have seen a copy of Speght's edition of Chaucer, which formerly belonged to Dr. Gabriel Harvey, (the antagonist of Nash) who, in his own hand-writing, has set down *Hamlet*, as a performance with which he was well acquainted, in the year 1598. His words are these: "The younger sort take much delight in Shakspeare's Venus and Adonis; but his Lucrece, and his tragedy of Hamlet, Prince of Denmarke, have it in them to please the wiser sort, 1598."

In the books of the Stationers' Company, this play was entered by James Roberts, July 26, 1602, under the title of "A booke called *The Revenge of Hamlett, Prince of Denmarke*, as it was lately acted by the lord chamberlain his servantes."

In *Eastward Hoe*, by George Chapman, Ben Jonson, and John Marston, 1605, is a fling at the hero of this tragedy. A footman named *Hamlet* enters, and a tankard-bearer asks him—"'Sfoote, *Hamlet*, are you *mad?*"

The frequent allusions of contemporary authors to this play sufficiently show its popularity. Thus, in Decker's *Bel-man's Nightwalkes*, 4to. 1612, we have—"But if any *mad Hamlet*, hearing this, smell villainie, and rush in by violence to see what the tawny diuels [gypsies] are dooing, then they excuse the fact," &c. Again, in an old collection of Satirical Poems, called *The Night-Raven*, is this couplet:

"I will not cry *Hamlet, Revenge* my greeves,
"But I will call Hangman, Revenge on thieves." *Steevens.*

Surely no satire was intended in *Eastward Hoe*, which was acted at Shakspeare's own playhouse, (Blackfriers) by the children of the revels, in 1605. *Malone.*

The following particulars relative to the date of this piece are borrowed from Dr. Farmer's *Essay on the Learning of Shakspeare*, p. 85, 86, second edition:

"Greene, in the epistle prefixed to his *Arcadia*, hath a lash at some 'vaine glorious tragedians,' and very plainly at Shakspeare in particular.—'I leave all these to the mercy of their *mother-tongue*, that feed on nought but the crums that fall from the *translator's* trencher.—That could scarcely *latinize* their neck verse if they should have neede, yet *English Seneca*, read by candlelight yeelds many good sentences—hee will afford you whole *Hamlets*, I should say, *handfuls* of tragicall speeches.'—I cannot determine exactly when this *Epistle* was first published; but, I fancy, it will carry the original *Hamlet* somewhat further back than we have hitherto done: and it may be observed, that

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the oldest copy now extant is said to be 'enlarged to almost as much againe as it was.' *Gabriel Harvey* printed at the end of the year 1592, 'Foure letters and certaine Sonnetts, especially touching *Robert Greene*:' in one of which his *Arcadia* is mentioned. Now *Nash's* Epistle must have been previous to these, as *Gabriel* is quoted in it with applause; and the *Foure Letters* were the beginning of a quarrel. *Nash* replied in 'Strange News of the intercepting certaine Letters, and a Convoy of Verses, as they were going *privilie* to victual the *Low Countries*, 1593.' *Harvey* rejoined the same year in '*Pierce's* Supererogation, or a new Praise of the old Asse.' And *Nash* again, in 'Have with you to *Saffron Walden*, or *Gabriell Harvey's* Hunt is up;' containing a full answer to the eldest sonne of the halter-maker, 1596.'—*Nash* died before 1606, as appears from an old comedy called *The Return from Parnassus*. *Steevens*.

A play on the subject of *Hamlet* had been exhibited on the stage before the year 1589, of which Thomas Kyd was, I believe, the author. On that play, and on the bl. l. *Historie of Hamblet*, our poet, I conjecture, constructed the tragedy before us. The earliest edition of the prose-narrative which I have seen, was printed in 1608, but it undoubtedly was a re-publication.

Shakspeare's *Hamlet* was written, if my conjecture be well founded, in 1596. *Malone*.

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PERSONS REPRESENTED.

Cladius, *king of* Denmark.
Hamlet,[1] *son to the former, and nephew to the present, king.*
Polonius, *lord chamberlain.*
Horatio, *friend to* Hamlet.
Laertes, *son to* Polonius.
Voltimand, Cornelius, Rosencrantz, Guildenstern, } *courtiers.*
Osric, *a courtier.*
Another courtier.
A priest.
Marcellus, Bernardo, } *officers.*
Francisco, *a soldier.*
Reynaldo, *servant to* Polonius.
A captain. An ambassador.
Ghost of Hamlet's *father.*
Fortinbras, *prince of* Norway.

Gertrude, *queen of* Denmark, *and mother of* Hamlet.
Ophelia, *daughter of* Polonius.

Lords, ladies, officers, soldiers, players, grave-diggers, sailors, messengers, and other attendants.

SCENE, Elsinore.

[1] *Hamlet,*] i. e. *Amleth.* The *h* transferred from the end to the beginning of the name. *Steevens.*

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HAMLET,

PRINCE OF DENMARK.

ACT I....SCENE I.

Elsinore. *A Platform before the Castle.*

FRANCISCO *on his Post.* *Enter to him* BERNARDO.

Ber. Who 's there?
Fran. Nay, answer me:[2] stand, and unfold
Yourself.
Ber. Long live the king![3]
Fran. Bernardo?
Ber. He.
Fran. You come most carefully upon your hour.
Ber. 'Tis now struck twelve;[4] get thee to bed, Fran- *new*
cisco.
Fran. For this relief, much thanks: 'tis bitter cold,
And I am sick at heart.
Ber. Have you had quiet guard?
Fran. Not a mouse stirring.
Ber. Well, good night.
If you do meet Horatio and Marcellus,
The rivals of my watch,[5] bid them make haste.

[2] —— *me:*] i. e. *me* who am already on the watch, and have a right to demand the watch-word. *Steevens.*

[3] *Long live the king!*] This sentence appears to have been the watch-word. *Malone.*

[4] *'Tis* now *struck twelve;*] I strongly suspect that the true reading is—*new* struck &c. So, in *Romeo and Juliet*, Act I, sc. i:
"But *new* struck nine." *Steevens.*

[5] *The* rivals *of my watch,*] *Rivals* for partners. *Warburton.*
Rival is constantly used by Shakspeare for a partner or associate. *Malone.*

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Enter HORATIO *and* MARCELLUS.

Fran. I think, I hear them.—Stand, ho! Who is there?
Hor. Friends to this ground.
Mar. And liegemen to the Dane.
Fran. Give you good night.
Mar. O, farewel, honest soldier:
Who hath reliev'd you?
Fran. Bernardo hath my place.
Give you good night. [*Exit* FRAN.
Mar. Holla! Bernardo!
Ber. Say,
What, is Horatio there?
Hor. A piece of him.[6]
Ber. Welcome, Horatio; welcome, good Marcellus.
Hor. What,[7] has this thing appeared again to-night?
Ber. I have seen nothing.
Mar. Horatio says, 'tis but our fantasy;
And will not let belief take hold of him,
Touching this dreaded sight, twice seen of us:
Therefore I have entreated him along,
With us to watch the minutes of this night;[8]
That, if again this apparition come,
He may approve our eyes,[9] and speak to it.

[6] *Hor.* A piece *of him.*] But why *a piece?* He says this as he gives his hand. Which direction should be marked. *Warburton.*
A piece of him, is, I believe, no more than a cant expression. It is used, however, on a serious occasion in *Pericles:*
" Take in your arms this *piece* of your dead queen."
Steevens.

[7] Hor. *What,* &c.] Thus the quarto, 1604. *Steevens.*
These words are in the folio given to Marcellus. *Malone.*

[8] —— *the minutes of this night;*] This seems to have been an expression common in Shakspeare's time. I find it in one of Ford's plays, *The Fancies chaste and noble,* Act V:
" I promise ere *the minutes of the night.*" *Steevens.*

[9] —— approve *our eyes,*] Add a new testimony to that of our eyes. *Johnson.*
So, in *King Lear:*
" —— this *approves* her letter,
" That she would soon be here."
See *Antony and Cleopatra,* Act I, sc. i. *Steevens.*
He may approve *our eyes,*] He may make good the testimony of our eyes; be assured by his own experience of the truth of that which we have related, in *consequence of having been eye-*

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Hor. Tush! tush! 'twill not appear.
Ber. Sit down awhile;
And let us once again assail your ears,
That are so fortified against our story,
What we two nights have seen.[1]
Hor. Well, sit we down,
And let us hear Bernardo speak of this.
Ber. Last night of all,
When yon same star, that 's westward from the pole,
Had made his course to illume that part of heaven
Where now it burns, Marcellus, and myself,
The bell then beating one, —
Mar. Peace, break thee off; look, where it comes again!

Enter Ghost.

Ber. In the same figure, like the king that 's dead.
Mar. Thou art a scholar, speak to it, Horatio.[2]
Ber. Looks it not like the king? mark it, Horatio.
Hor. Most like:—it harrows me[3] with fear, and wonder.

witnesses to it. To *approve*, in Shakspeare's age, signified to *make good*, or establish, and is so defined in Cawdrey's *Alphabetical Table of hard English Words*, 8vo. 1604. So, in *King Lear:*

" Good king that must *approve* the common saw!
" Thou out of heaven's benediction com'st
" To the warm sun." *Malone.*

1 *What we two nights have seen.*] This line is by Sir Thomas Hanmer given to Marcellus, but without necessity. *Johnson.*

2 *Thou art a scholar, speak to it, Horatio.*] It has always been a vulgar notion, that spirits and supernatural beings can only be spoken to with propriety or effect by persons of learning. Thus, Toby, in *The Night-walker*, by Beaumont and Fletcher, says:

" —— It grows still longer,
" 'Tis steeple-high now; and it sails away, nurse.
" Let 's call the butler up, for *he speaks Latin*,
" *And that will daunt the devil.*"

In like manner the honest butler, in Mr. Addison's *Drummer*, recommends the steward to speak *Latin* to the ghost in that play. *Reed.*

3 —— *it* harrows *me* &c.] To *harrow* is to conquer, to subdue. The word is of Saxon origin. So, in the old black letter romance of *Syr Eglamoure of Artoys:*

" He swore by him that *harrowed* hell."

Milton has adopted this phrase in his *Comus:*

" Amaz'd I stood, *harrowed with* grief and *fear!*" *Steevens.*

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Ber. It would be spoke to.

Mar. Speak to it, Horatio.

Hor. What art thou, that usurp'st this time of night,
Together with that fair and warlike form
In which the majesty of buried Denmark
Did sometimes march? by heaven I charge thee, speak.

Mar. It is offended.

Ber. See! it stalks away.

Hor. Stay; speak: speak; I charge thee, speak.
[*Exit* Ghost.

Mar. 'Tis gone, and will not answer.

Ber. How now, Horatio? you tremble, and look pale:
Is not this something more than fantasy?
What think you of it?

Hor. Before my God, I might not this believe,
Without the sensible and true avouch
Of mine own eyes.

Mar. Is it not like the king?

Hor. As thou art to thyself:
Such was the very armour he had on,
When he the ambitious Norway combated;
So frowned he once, when, in an angry parle,[4]
He smote the sledded[5] Polack on the ice.[6]

[4] —— *an angry* parle,] This is one of the affected words introduced by Lyly. So, in *The Two wise Men and all the rest Fools*, 1619:

"—— that you told me at our last *parle*." *Steevens.*

[5] —— *sledded* —] A *sled*, or *sledge*, is a carriage without wheels, made use of in the cold countries. So, in *Tamburlaine, or the Scythian Shepherd*, 1590:

"—— upon an ivory *sled*
"Thou shalt be drawn among the frozen poles." *Steevens.*

[6] *He smote the sledded* Polack *on the ice.*] *Pole-ax* in the common editions. He speaks of a prince of Poland whom he slew in battle. He uses the word *Polack* again, Act II, sc. iv. *Pope.*

Polack was, in that age, the term for an inhabitant of Poland: *Polaque*, French. As in F. Davison's translation of Passeratius's epitaph on Henry III of France, published by Camden:

"Whether thy chance or choice thee hither brings,
"Stay, passenger, and wail the hap of kings.
"This little stone a great king's heart doth hold,
"Who rul'd the fickle French and *Polacks* bold:
"Whom, with a mighty warlike host attended,
"With trait'rous knife a cowled monster ended.

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'Tis strange.

Mar. Thus, twice before, and jump at this dead hour,[7]
With martial stalk hath he gone by our watch.

Hor. In what particular thought to work,[8] I know not;
But, in the gross and scope[9] of mine opinion,
This bodes some strange eruption to our state.

Mar. Good now, sit down, and tell me, he that knows,
Why this same strict and most observant watch
So nightly toils the subject of the land?
And why such daily cast[1] of brazen cannon,
And foreign mart for implements of war;
Why such impress of shipwrights,[2] whose sore task
Does not divide the Sunday from the week:

" So frail are even the highest earthly things!
" Go, passenger, and wail the hap of kings." *Johnson.*

[7] —— jump *at this dead hour,*] So, the 4to. 1604. The folio —*just. Steevens.*

The correction was probably made by the author. *Johnson.*

Jump and *just* were synonymous in the time of Shakspeare. Ben Jonson speaks of verses made on *jump names*, i. e. names that suit exactly. Nash says—" and *jumpe* imitating a verse in As in præsenti." So, in Chapman's *May Day*, 1611:

" Your appointment was *jumpe* at three, with me."

Again, in M. Kyffin's translation of the *Andria* of Terence, 1588:

" Comes he this day so *jump* in the very time of this marriage?" *Steevens.*

[8] *In what particular thought to work,*] i. e. What particular train of thinking to follow. *Steevens.*

[9] —— *gross and scope* —] General thoughts, and tendency at large. *Johnson.*

[1] —— *daily* cast —] The quartos read—*cost. Steevens.*

[2] *Why such* impress *of shipwrights,*] Judge Barrington, *Observations on the more ancient statutes*, p. 300, having observed that Shakspeare gives English manners to every country where his scene lies, infers from this passage, that in the time even of queen Elizabeth, shipwrights as well as seamen were forced to serve. *Whalley.*

Impress signifies only the act of retaining shipwrights by giving them what was called *prest* money (from *prêt*, Fr.) for holding themselves in *readiness* to be employed. Thus, Chapman, in his version of the second book of Homer's *Odyssey*:

" I, from the people straight, will *press* for you
" *Free voluntaries*; —."

See Mr. Douce's note on *King Lear*, Act IV, sc. vi. *Steevens.*

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What might be toward, that this sweaty haste
Doth make the night joint-labourer with the day;
Who is 't, that can inform me?
Hor. That can I;
At least, the whisper goes so. Our last king,
Whose image even but now appear'd to us,
Was, as you know, by Fortinbras of Norway,
Thereto prick'd on by a most emulate pride,
Dar'd to the combat; in which, our valiant Hamlet
(For so this side of our known world esteem'd him)
Did slay this Fortinbras; who, by a seal'd compact,
Well ratified by law, and heraldry,[3]
Did forfeit, with his life, all those his lands,
Which he stood seiz'd of, to the conqueror:
Against the which, a moiety competent
Was gaged by our king; which had return'd
To the inheritance of Fortinbras,
Had he been vanquisher; as, by the same co-mart,
And carriage of the article design'd,[4]

[3] —— *by law, and heraldry,*] Mr. Upton says, that Shakspeare sometimes expresses one thing by two substantives, and that *law and heraldry* means, by the *herald law*. So, in *Antony and Cleopatra*, Act IV:

"Where rather I expect victorious life,
"Than *death and honour.*"

i. e. honourable death. *Steevens.*

Puttenham, in his *Art of Poesie*, speaks of *The Figure of Twynnes*: "*horses and barbes*, for *barbed horses*, *venim* and *dartes*, for *venimous dartes*," &c. *Farmer.*

—— *law, and heraldry,*] That is, according to the forms of *law and heraldry*. When the right of property was to be determined by combat, the rules of *heraldry* were to be attended to, as well as those of *law*. *M. Mason.*

i. e. to be well ratified by the rules of law, and the forms prescribed *jure feciali*; such as proclamation, &c. *Malone.*

[4] —— *as, by* the same co-mart,

And carriage of the article design'd,] *Co-mart* signifies a bargain, and *carrying of the article*, the *covenant* entered into to confirm that bargain. Hence we see the common reading [*covenant*] makes a tautology. *Warburton.*

Thus the quarto, 1604. The folio reads—as by *the same covenant*: for which the late editions have given us—as by *that* covenant.

Co-mart is, I suppose, a *joint bargain*, a word perhaps of our poet's coinage. A *mart* signifying a great fair or market, he

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His fell to Hamlet: now, sir, young Fortinbras,
Of unimprov'd mettle hot and full,[5]
Hath in the skirts of Norway, here and there,
Shark'd up a list of landless resolutes,[6]
For food and diet, to some enterprize
That hath a stomach in 't:[7] which is no other
(As it doth well appear unto our state)
But to recover of us, by strong hand,
And terms compulsatory,[8] those 'foresaid lands
So by his father lost: and this, I take it,
Is the main motive of our preparations;
The source of this our watch; and the chief head
Of this post-haste and romage[9] in the land.

would not have scrupled to have written—*to mart*, in the sense of *to make a bargain*. In the preceding speech we find *mart* used for bargain or purchase. *Malone.*

He has not scrupled so to write in *Cymbeline*, Act I, sc. vii:

" —— to *mart*
" As in a Romish stew," &c. *Steevens.*

And carriage *of the article* design'd,] *Carriage* is *import: design'd* is *formed, drawn up between them. Johnson.*

Cawdrey, in his *Alphabetical Table*, 1604, defines the verb *design* thus: " To marke out or appoint for any purpose." See also Minsheu's *Dict.* 1617: " To *designe* or shew by a token." *Designed* is yet used in this sense in Scotland. The old copies have *deseigne*. The correction was made by the editor of the second folio. *Malone.*

[5] *Of unimproved* &c.] *Full of unimproved mettle*, is full of spirit not regulated or guided by knowledge or experience. *Johnson.*

[6] Shark'd *up a list* &c.] I believe, to *shark up* means to pick up without distinction, as the *shark*-fish collects his prey. The quartos read *lawless*, instead of *landless*. *Steevens.*

[7] *That hath a* stomach *in 't:*] *Stomach*, in the time of our author, was used for *constancy, resolution. Johnson.*

[8] *And terms* compulsatory,] Thus the quarto, 1604. The folio—*compulsative. Steevens.*

[9] —— *romage*—] Tumultuous hurry. *Johnson.*

Commonly written—*rummage*. I am not, however, certain that the word *romage* has been properly explained. The following passage in Hackluyt's *Voyages*, 1599, Vol. III, Ppp 3, seems indicative of a different meaning: " — the ships growne foule un*roomaged*, and scarcely able to beare any saile," &c. Again Vol. III, 88, " — the mariners were *romaging* their shippes," &c.

Romage, on shipboard, must have signified a scrupulous examination into the state of the vessel and its stores. Respecting

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[*Ber.* I think,[1] it be no other, but even so:
Well may it sort,[2] that this portentous figure
Comes armed through our watch; so like the king
That was, and is, the question of these wars.[3]
Hor. A mote it is,[4] to trouble the mind's eye.
In the most high and palmy state of Rome,[5]

land-service, the same term implied a strict inquiry into the kingdom, that means of defence might be supplied where they were wanted. *Steevens.*

Rummage, is properly explained by Johnson himself in his Dictionary, as it is at present daily used,—to search for any thing. *Harris.*

1 [*I think*, &c.] These, and all other lines, confined within crotchets, throughout this play, are omitted in the folio edition of 1623. The omissions leave the play sometimes better and sometimes worse, and seem made only for the sake of abbreviation. *Johnson.*

It may be worth while to observe, that the title-pages of the first quartos in 1604 and 1605, declare this play to be *enlarged to almost as much againe as it was, according to the true and perfect copy.*

Perhaps, therefore, many of its absurdities, as well as beauties, arose from the quantity added after it was first written. Our poet might have been more attentive to the amplification than the coherence of his fable.

The degree of credit due to the title-page that styles the MS. from which the quartos, 1604 and 1605, were printed, the *true and perfect copy*, may also be disputable. I cannot help supposing this publication to contain all Shakspeare rejected, as well as all he supplied. By restorations like the former, contending booksellers or theatres might have gained some temporary advantage over each other, which at this distance of time is not to be understood. The patience of our ancestors exceeded our own, could it have outlasted the tragedy of *Hamlet* as it is now printed; for it must have occupied almost five hours in representation. If, however, it was too much dilated on the ancient stage, it is as injudiciously contracted on the modern one. *Steevens.*

2 *Well may it sort*,] The cause and effect are proportionate and suitable. *Johnson.*

3 —— *the* question *of these wars.*] The theme or subject. So, in *Antony and Cleopatra:*

"—— You were the *word of war.*" *Malone.*

4 *A* mote *it is*,] The first quarto reads—*a moth. Steevens.*

A *moth* was only the old spelling of *mote*, as I suspected in revising a passage in *King John*, Vol. VII, p. 374, n. 1, where we certainly should read *mote. Malone.*

5 —— palmy *state of Rome*,] *Palmy*, for *victorious. Pope.*

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A little ere the mightiest Julius fell,
The graves stood tenantless, and the sheeted dead
Did squeak and gibber in the Roman streets.

As, stars with trains of fire and dews of blood,
Disasters in the sun;[6] and the moist star,[7]

[6] *As, stars with trains of fire and dews of blood,*
Disasters in *the sun;*] Mr. Rowe altered these lines, because they have insufficient connection with the preceding ones, thus:

Stars shone *with trains of fire, dews of blood* fell,
Disasters veil'd *the sun*, ——.

This passage is not in the folio. By the quartos, therefore, our imperfect text is supplied; for an intermediate verse being evidently lost, it were idle to attempt a union that never was intended. I have therefore signified the supposed deficiency by a vacant space.

When Shakspeare had told us that *the grave stood tenantless*, &c. which are wonders confined to the earth, he naturally proceeded to say (in the line now lost) that *yet other prodigies appeared in the sky;* and these phænomena he exemplified by adding,—*As* [i. e. as for instance] *Stars with trains of fire*, &c.

So, in *King Henry IV*, P. II: "— to bear the inventory of thy shirts; *as*, one for superfluity," &c.

Again, in *King Henry VI*, P. III:

"Two Cliffords, *as* the father and the son,
"And two Northumberlands; —"

Again, in *The Comedy of Errors:*

"They say, this town is full of cozenage;
"*As*, nimble jugglers that deceive the eye" &c. *Steevens.*

Disasters dimm'd *the sun;*] The quarto, 1604, reads:

Disasters in *the sun;* ——.

For the emendation I am responsible. It is strongly supported not only by Plutarch's account in *The Life of Cæsar*, ["also the brightness of the *sunne* was *darkened*, the which, all that yeare through, rose very *pale*, and *shined not out*,"] but by various passages in our author's works. So, in *The Tempest:*

"—— I have be-*dimm'd*
"The noon-tide *sun*."

Again, in *King Richard II:*

"As doth the blushing discontented *sun*,
"When he perceives the envious clouds are bent
"To *dim* his glory."

Again, in our author's 18th Sonnet:

"Sometimes too hot *the eye of heaven* shines,
"And often is his gold complexion *dimm'd*."

I suspect that the words *As stars* are a corruption, and have no doubt that either a line preceding or following the first of those quoted at the head of this note, has been lost; or that the be-

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Upon whose influence Neptune's empire stands,
Was sick almost to doomsday with eclipse.

ginning of one line has been joined to the end of another, the intervening words being omitted. That such conjectures are not merely chimerical, I have already proved. See Vol. VIII, p. 296, n. 2; and Vol. XI, p. 67, n. 5.

The following lines in *Julius Cæsar*, in which the prodigies that are said to have preceded his death, are recounted, may throw some light on the passage before us:

" —— There is one within,
" Besides the things that we have heard and seen,
" Recounts most horrid sights seen by the watch.
" A lioness hath whelped in the streets;
" And graves have yawn'd and yielded up their dead:
" Fierce fiery warriors fight upon the clouds,
" In ranks, and squadrons, and right form of war,
" Which drizzled blood upon the Capitol:
" The noise of battle hurtled in the air,
" Horses do neigh, and dying men did groan;
" And ghosts did shriek and squeal about the streets."

The lost words perhaps contained a description of *fiery warriors fighting on the clouds*, or of *brands burning bright beneath the stars*.

The 15th Book of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, translated by Golding, in which an account is given of the prodigies that preceded Cæsar's death, furnished Shakspeare with some of the images in both these passages:

" —— battels fighting in the clouds with crashing armour flew,
" And dreadful trumpets sounded in the ayre, and hornes eke blew,
" As warning men beforehand of the mischiefe that did brew;
" And Phœbus also looking *dim* did cast a drowsie light,
" Uppon the earth, which seemde likewise to be in sory plighte:
" From underneath beneath the starres brandes oft seemde burning bright,
" It often rain'd drops of blood. The morning star look'd blew,
" And was bespotted here and there with specks of rustic hew,
" The moone had also spots of blood.—
" Salt teares from ivorie—images in sundry places fell;—
" The dogges did howle, and every where appeared ghastly sprights,
" And with an earthquake shaken was the towne."—

Plutarch only says, that "the sunne was darkened," that "diverse men were seen going up and down in fire;" there were "fires in the element; sprites were seene running up and downe in the night, and solitaire birds sitting in the great market-place."

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And even[8] the like precurse of fierce events,—[9]
As harbingers preceding still the fates,
And prologue to the omen coming on,—[1]
Have heaven and earth together demonstrated

The disagreeable recurrence of the word *stars* in the second line induces me to believe that *As stars* in that which precedes, is a corruption. Perhaps Shakspeare wrote:

Astres *with trains of fire*, ——
—— *and dews of blood*
Disastrous *dimm'd the sun.*

The word *astre* is used in an old collection of poems entitled *Diana*, addressed to the Earl of Oxenforde, a book of which I know not the date, but believe it was printed about 1580. In *Othello* we have *antres*, a word exactly of a similar formation.
Malone.

The word—*astre*, (which is no where else to be found) was affectedly taken from the French by John Southern, author of the poems cited by Mr. Malone. This wretched plagiarist stands indebted both for his verbiage and his imagery to *Ronsard*. See the *European Magazine*, for June, 1788, p. 389. *Steevens.*

[7] —— *and the moist star*, &c.] i. e. the moon. So, in Marlowe's *Hero and Leander*, 1598:

" Not that night-wandering, pale, and *watery star*," &c.
Malone.

[8] *And even* —] Not only such prodigies have been seen in Rome, but the elements have shown our countrymen like forerunners and foretokens of violent events. *Johnson.*

[9] —— *precurse of* fierce *events*,] *Fierce*, for terrible. *Warburton.*

I rather believe that *fierce* signifies *conspicuous*, *glaring*. It is used in a somewhat similar sense in *Timon of Athens:*

" O the *fierce* wretchedness that glory brings!"

Again, in *King Henry VIII*, we have " *fierce* vanities." *Steevens.*

[1] *And* prologue *to the* omen *coming on*,] But *prologue* and *omen* are merely synonymous here. The poet means, that these strange *phænomena* are prologues and forerunners of the events *presaged:* and such sense the slight alteration, which I have ventured to make, by changing *omen* to *omen'd*, very aptly gives. *Theobald.*

Omen, for fate. *Warburton.*

Hanmer follows Theobald.

A distich from the life of Merlin, by Heywood, however, will show that there is no occasion for correction:

" *Merlin* well vers'd in many a hidden spell,
" His countries *omen* did long since fortell." *Farmer.*

Again, in *The Vowbreaker:*

" And much I fear the weakness of her braine
" Should draw her to some *ominous* exigent."

Omen, I believe, is danger. *Steevens.*

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Unto our climatures and countrymen.—]

Re-enter Ghost.

But, soft; behold! lo, where it comes again!
I 'll cross it, though it blast me.—Stay, illusion!
If thou hast any sound,[2] or use of voice,
Speak to me:
If there be any good thing to be done,
That may to thee do ease, and grace to me,
Speak to me:
If thou art privy to thy country's fate,
Which, happily, foreknowing may avoid,
O, speak!
Or, if thou hast uphoarded[3] in thy life
Extorted treasure in the womb of earth,
For which, they say, you spirits oft walk in death,
[*Cock crows.*
Speak of it:—stay, and speak.—Stop it, Marcellus.

Mar. Shall I strike at it with my partizan?

Hor. Do, if it will not stand.[4]

And even the like precurse *of fierce events,*
As harbingers *preceding still the fates,*
And prologue to the omen *coming on,*] So, in one of our author's poems:

" But thou shrieking *harbinger*
" Foul *precurser* of the fiend,
" *Augur* of the fever's end," &c.

The omen coming on is, the approaching dreadful and portentous event. So, in *King Richard III:*

" Thy name is *ominous* to children."

i. e. (not boding ill fortune, but) *destructive* to children.

Again, *ibidem:*

" O Pomfret, Pomfret, O, thou bloody prison,
" Fatal and *ominous* to noble peers." *Malone.*

[2] *If thou hast any sound,*] The speech of Horatio to the spectre is very elegant and noble, and congruous to the common traditions of the causes of apparitions. *Johnson.*

[3] *Or, if thou hast uphoarded* &c.] So, in Decker's *Knight's Conjuring,* &c. " — If any of them had bound the spirit of gold by any charmes *in caves, or in* iron fetters *under the ground,* they should *for their own soules quiet* (*which questionlesse else would whine up and down*) if not for the good of their children, release it." *Steevens.*

[4] —— *Stop it, Marcellus.* ——

Hor. *Do, if it will not stand,*] I am unwilling to suppose that Shakspeare could appropriate these absurd effusions to *Horatio,* who is a scholar, and has sufficiently proved his good under-

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Ber. 'Tis here!
Hor. 'Tis here!
Mar. 'Tis gone! [*Exit* Ghost.
We do it wrong, being so majestical,
To offer it the show of violence;
For it is, as the air, invulnerable,
And our vain blows malicious mockery.
Ber. It was about to speak, when the cock crew.
Hor. And then it started, like a guilty thing
Upon a fearful summons. I have heard,
The cock, that is the trumpet to the morn,[5]
Doth with his lofty and shrill-sounding throat

standing by the propriety of his addresses to the phantom. Such a man therefore must have known that—

"As easy might he the intrenchant air
"With his keen sword impress,"

as commit any act of violence on the royal shadow. The words —*Stop it, Marcellus,*—and *Do, if it will not stand*—better suit the next speaker, *Bernardo,* who, in the true spirit of an unlettered officer, *nihil non arroget armis.* Perhaps the first idea that occurs to a man of this description, is to strike at what offends him. Nicholas Poussin, in his celebrated picture of the Crucifixion, has introduced a similar occurrence. While lots are casting for the sacred vesture, the graves are giving up their dead. This prodigy is perceived by one of the soldiers, who instantly grasps his sword, as if preparing to defend himself, or resent such an invasion from the other world.

The two next speeches—*'Tis here!*—*'Tis here!*—may be allotted to *Marcellus and Bernardo;* and the third—*'Tis gone!* &c. to Horatio, whose superiority of character indeed seems to demand it.—As the text now stands, Marcellus proposes to strike the Ghost with his partizan, and yet afterwards is made to descant on the indecorum and impotence of such an attempt.

The names of speakers have so often been confounded by the first publishers of our author, that I suggest this change with less hesitation than I should express concerning any conjecture that could operate to the disadvantage of his words or meaning.—Had the assignment of the old copies been such, would it have been thought liable to objection? *Steevens.*

[5] *The cock, that is the trumpet to the morn,*] So, the quarto, 1604. Folio—to the *day.*

In *England's Parnassus,* 8vo. 1600, I find the two following lines ascribed to Drayton, but know not in which of his poems they are found:

"And now *the cocke, the morning's trumpeter,*
"Play'd huntsup for the day-star to appear."

Mr. Gray has imitated our poet:

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Awake the god of day; and, at his warning,
Whether in sea or fire, in earth or air,[6]

" The *cock's* shrill *clarion*, or the echoing horn,
" No more shall rouse them from their lowly bed."
Malone.

[6] *Whether in sea* &c.] According to the pneumatology of that time, every element was inhabited by its peculiar order of spirits, who had dispositions different, according to their various places of abode. The meaning therefore is, that all *spirits extravagant*, wandering out of their element, whether aërial spirits visiting earth, or earthly spirits ranging the air, return to their station, to their proper limits in which they are *confined*. We might read:

" —— And at his warning
" Th' extravagant and erring spirit hies
" To his confine, whether in sea or air,
" Or earth, or fire. And of," &c.

But this change, though it would smooth the construction, is not necessary, and, being unnecessary, should not be made against authority. *Johnson.*

A Chorus in Andreini's drama, called *Adamo*, written in 1613, consists of spirits of fire, air, water, and hell, or subterraneous, being the exiled angels. " Choro di Spiriti ignei, aerei, acquatici, ed infernali," &c. These are the demons to which Shakspeare alludes. These spirits were supposed to controul the elements in which they respectively resided; and when formally invoked or commanded by a magician, to produce tempests, conflagrations, floods, and earthquakes. For thus says *The Spanish Mandeville of Miracles*, &c. 1600: " Those which are in the middle region of the ayre, and those that are under them nearer the earth, are those, which sometimes out of the ordinary operation of nature doe moove the windes with greater fury than they are accustomed; and do, out of season, congeele the cloudes, causing it to thunder, lighten, hayle, and to destroy the grasse, corne, &c. &c.——Witches and negromancers worke many such like things by the help of those spirits," &c. *Ibid.* Of this school therefore was Shakspeare's Prospero in *The Tempest*. *T. Warton.*

Bourne of Newcastle, in his *Antiquities of the common People*, informs us, " It is a received tradition among the vulgar, that at the time of cock-crowing, the midnight spirits forsake these lower regions, and go to their proper places.—Hence it is, (says he) that in country places, where the way of life requires more early labour, they always go chearfully to work at that time; whereas if they are called abroad sooner, they imagine every thing they see, a wandering ghost." And he quotes on this occasion, as all his predecessors had done, the well-known lines from the first hymn of *Prudentius*. I know not whose translation he gives us, but there is an old one by Heywood. The *pious chansons*, the *hymns* and *carrols*, which Shakspeare mentions presently, were usually copied from the elder Christian poets. *Farmer.*

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The extravagant[7] and erring spirit[8] hies
To his confine: and of the truth herein
This present object made probation.
Mar. It faded on the crowing of the cock.[9]
Some say, that ever 'gainst that season comes
Wherein our Saviour's birth is celebrated,
This bird of dawning singeth all night long:
And then, they say, no spirit dares stir abroad;[1]
The nights are wholesome; then no planets strike,
No fairy takes,[2] nor witch hath power to charm,
So hallow'd and so gracious is the time.

[7] *The extravagant* —] i. e. got out of his bounds. *Warburton.*
So, in *Nobody and Somebody*, 1598: "—— they took me up for a *'stravagant.*"
Shakspeare imputes the same effect to *Aurora's harbinger* in the the last scene of the third Act of the *Midsummer Night's Dream.* See Vol. II, p. 330. *Steevens.*

[8] —— *erring* spirit,] *Erring* is here used in the sense of *wandering.* Thus, in Chapman's version of the fourth Book of Homer's *Odyssey*, Telemachus calls Ulysses—
"My *erring* father: —"
And in the ninth Book, Ulysses describing himself and his companions to the Cyclop, says—
"—— *erring* Grecians we,
"From Troy were turning homewards" —
Erring, in short, is *erraticus. Steevens.*

[9] *It faded on the crowing of the cock,*] This is a very ancient superstition. Philostratus giving an account of the apparition of Achilles' shade to Apollonius Tyaneus, says that it vanished with a little glimmer as soon as the *cock crowed.* Vit. Apol. iv, 16. *Steevens.*
Faded has here its original sense; it *vanished. Vado*, Lat. So, in Spenser's *Fairy Queen*, Book I, c. v, st. 15:
"He stands amazed how he thence should *fade.*"
That our author uses the word in this sense, appears from the following lines:
"—— The morning *cock crew* loud;
"And at the sound it shrunk in haste away,
"And *vanish'd* from our sight." *Malone.*

[1] —— dares stir *abroad;*] Thus the quarto. The folio reads—*can walk. Steevens.*
Spirit was formerly used as a monosyllable: *sprite.* The quarto, 1604, has—*dare* stir abroad. Perhaps Shakspeare wrote—no *spirits* dare stir abroad. The necessary correction was made in a late quarto of no authority, printed in 1637. *Malone.*

[2] *No fairy* takes,] No fairy *strikes* with lameness or diseases. This sense of *take* is frequent in this author. *Johnson.*

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Hor. So have I heard, and do in part believe it.
But, look, the morn, in russet mantle clad,
Walks o'er the dew of yon high eastern hill :[3]
Break we our watch up; and, by my advice,
Let us impart what we have seen to-night
Unto young Hamlet; for, upon my life,
This spirit, dumb to us, will speak to him:
Do you consent we shall acquaint him with it,
As needful in our loves, fitting our duty?

Mar. Let 's do 't, I pray; and I this morning know
Where we shall find him most convenient. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

The same. A Room of State in the same.

Enter the King, Queen, HAMLET, POLONIUS, LAERTES, VOLTIMAND, CORNELIUS, Lords, *and Attendants.*

King. Though yet of Hamlet our dear brother's death
The memory be green; and that it us befitted[4]
To bear our hearts in grief, and our whole kingdom
To be contracted in one brow of woe;
Yet so far hath discretion fought with nature,

So, in *The Merry Wives of Windsor :*

" And there he blasts the tree, and *takes* the cattle."
Steevens.

[3] —— *high* eastern *hill :*] The old quarto has it better *eastward. Warburton.*

The superiority of the latter of these readings is not, to me at least, very apparent. I find the former used in *Lingua*, &c. 1607:

" —— and overclimbs
" Yonder gilt *eastern* hills."

Again, in Browne's *Britannia's Pastorals*, Book IV, Sat. iv, p. 75, edit. 1616:

" And ere the sunne had clymb'd the *easterne hils.*"

Again, in Chapman's version of the thirteenth Book of Homer's *Odyssey :*

" —— Ulysses still
" An eye directed to the *eastern hill.*"

Eastern and *eastward*, alike signify *toward the east. Steevens.*

[4] —— *and* that it *us befitted* —] Perhaps our author elliptically wrote

—— *and us befitted* —

i. e. and *that it* befitted us. *Steevens.*

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That we with wisest sorrow think on him,
Together with remembrance of ourselves.
Therefore our sometime sister, now our queen,
The imperial jointress of this warlike state,
Have we, as 'twere, with a defeated joy,—
With one auspicious, and one dropping eye;[5]
With mirth in funeral, and with dirge in marriage,
In equal scale weighing delight and dole,—
Taken to wife: nor have we herein barr'd
Your better wisdoms, which have freely gone
With this affair along:—For all, our thanks.
Now follows, that you know, young Fortinbras,—
Holding a weak supposal of our worth;
Or thinking, by our late dear brother's death,
Our state to be disjoint and out of frame,
Colleagued with this dream of his advantage,[6]
He hath not fail'd to pester us with message,
Importing the surrender of those lands
Lost by his father, with all bands of law,
To our most valiant brother.—So much for him.
Now for ourself, and for this time of meeting.
Thus much the business is: We have here writ
To Norway, uncle of young Fortinbras,—
Who, impotent and bed-rid, scarcely hears
Of this his nephew's purpose,—to suppress
His further gait herein; in that the levies,

[5] *With* one *auspicious, and* one *dropping eye;*] Thus the folio. The quarto, with somewhat less of quaintness:

With an *auspicious and* a *dropping eye.*

The same thought, however, occurs in *The Winter's Tale:* "She had *one eye* declined for the loss of her husband; *another* elevated that the oracle was fulfilled."

After all, perhaps, we have here only the ancient proverbial phrase—"To cry with one eye and laugh with the other," buckram'd by our author for the service of tragedy. See *Ray's Collection,* edit. 1768, p. 188. *Steevens.*

[6] Colleagued *with this dream of his advantage,*] The meaning is,—He goes to war so indiscreetly, and unprepared, that he has no allies to support him but a *dream,* with which he is *colleagued* or confederated. *Warburton.*

This dream of his advantage (as Mr. Mason observes) means only "this imaginary advantage, which Fortinbras hoped to derive from the unsettled state of the kingdom." *Steevens.*

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The lists, and full proportions, are all made
Out of his subject:—and we here despatch
You, good Cornelius, and you, Voltimand,
For bearers of this greeting to old Norway;
Giving to you no further personal power
To business with the king, more than the scope[8]
Of these dilated articles[9] allow.
Farewel; and let your haste commend your duty.

Cor. Vol. In that, and all things, will we show our duty.

King. We doubt it nothing; heartily farewel.

[*Exeunt* VOL. *and* COR.

And now, Laertes, what 's the news with you?
You told us of some suit; What is 't, Laertes?
You cannot speak of reason to the Dane,
And lose your voice: What would'st thou beg, Laertes,
That shall not be my offer, not thy asking?
The head is not more native to the heart,
The hand more instrumental to the mouth,
Than is the throne of Denmark to thy father.[1]

[7] —— *to suppress*
His further gait *herein,*] *Gate* or *gait* is here used in the northern sense, for *proceeding, passage;* from the A. S. verb *gae.* A *gate* for a path, passage, or street, is still current in the north. *Percy.*

So, in *A Midsummer Night's Dream,* Act. V, sc. ii:
" Every fairy take his *gait.*" *Harris.*

[8] —— *more than the scope* —] More is comprized in the general design of these articles, which you may explain in a more diffused and dilated style. *Johnson.*

[9] —— *these* dilated *articles* &c.] i. e. the articles when dilated. *Musgrave.*

The poet should have written *allows.* Many writers fall into this error, when a plural noun immediately precedes the verb; as I have had occasion to observe in a note on a controverted passage in *Love's Labour 's Lost.* So, in *Julius Cæsar:*
" The *posture* of your *blows are* yet unknown."
Again, in *Cymbeline:* " —— and the *approbation* of *those are* wonderfully to extend him," &c. *Malone.*

Surely, all such defects in our author, were merely the errors of illiterate transcribers or printers. *Steevens.*

[1] *The* head *is not more native to the heart,*
The hand more instrumental to the mouth,
Than is the throne of Denmark to thy father.] The sense seems to be this: The head is not formed to be more useful to the heart, the hand is not more at the service of the mouth, than

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What would'st thou have, Laertes?

Laer. My dread lord,
Your leave and favour to return to France;
From whence though willingly I came to Denmark,
To show my duty in your coronation;
Yet now, I must confess, that duty done,
My thoughts and wishes bend again toward France,
And bow them to your gracious leave and pardon.

King. Have you your father's leave? What says Polonius?

Pol. He hath, my lord, [wrung from me my slow leave,[2]
By laboursome petition; and, at last,
Upon his will I seal'd my hard consent:]
I do beseech you, give him leave to go.

King. Take thy fair hour, Laertes; time be thine,
And thy best graces: spend it at thy will.[3]—
But now, my cousin Hamlet, and my son,——

Ham. A little more than kin, and less than kind.[4]
[*Aside.*

my power is at your father's service. That is, he may command me to the utmost, he may do what he pleases with my kingly authority. *Steevens.*

By *native to the heart* Dr. Johnson understands, "natural and congenial to it, born with it, and co-operating with it."

Formerly the heart was supposed the seat of wisdom; and hence the poet speaks of the close connection between the heart and head. See *Coriolanus*, Act I, sc. i, Vol. XIII. *Malone.*

[2] —— *wrung from me my slow leave,*] These words and the two following lines are omitted in the folio. *Malone.*

[3] *Take thy fair hour, Laertes; time be thine,*
And thy best graces: spend it at thy will.] The sense is,—You have my leave to go, Laertes; make the fairest use you please of your time, and spend it at your will with the fairest graces you are master of. *Theobald.*

So, in *King Henry VIII:*

" —— and bear the inventory
" Of your *best graces* in your mind." *Steevens.*

I rather think this line is in want of emendation. I read:

—————— *time is thine,*
And my *best graces: spend it at thy will.* *Johnson.*

[4] Ham. *A little more than* kin, *and less than* kind.] *Kind* is the Teutonick word for *child.* Hamlet therefore answers with propriety, to the titles of *cousin* and *son,* which the king had given him, that he was somewhat more than *cousin,* and less than *son.* *Johnson.*

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King. How is it that the clouds still hang on you?
Ham. Not so, my lord, I am too much i' the sun.[5]

In this line, with which Shakspeare introduces *Hamlet*, Dr. Johnson has perhaps pointed out a nicer distinction than it can justly boast of. To establish the sense contended for, it should have been proved that *kind* was ever used by any English writer for *child*. *A little more than kin*, is a little more than a common relation. The King was certainly something *less than kind*, by having betrayed the mother of Hamlet into an indecent and incestuous marriage, and obtained the crown by means which he suspects to be unjustifiable. In the fifth Act, the prince accuses his uncle of having *popp'd in between the election and his hopes*, which obviates Dr. Warburton's objection to the old reading, viz. that "the king had given no occasion for such a reflection."

A jingle of the same sort is found in *Mother Bombie*, 1594, and seems to have been proverbial, as I have met with it more than once: "— the nearer we are in blood, the further we must be from love; the greater the *kindred* is, the less the *kindness* must be."

Again, in *Gorboduc*, a tragedy, 1561:

"In kinde a father, but not *kindelyness*."

In the *Battle of Alcazar*, 1594, Muly Mahomet is called "Traitor to *kinne* and *kinde*."

As *kind*, however, signifies *nature*, Hamlet may mean that his relationship was become an *unnatural* one, as it was partly founded upon incest. Our author's *Julius Cæsar*, *Antony and Cleopatra*, *King Richard II*, and *Titus Andronicus*, exhibit instances of *kind* being used for *nature*; and so too in this play of *Hamlet*, Act II, sc. the last:

"Remorseless, treacherous, lecherous, *kindless* villain."

Dr. Farmer, however, observes that *kin* is still used for *cousin* in the midland counties. *Steevens.*

Hamlet does not, I think, mean to say, as Mr. Steevens supposes, that *his uncle* is a little more than kin, &c. The King had called the Prince—"My cousin Hamlet, and my son."—His reply, therefore, is,—"I am a little more than thy kinsman, [for I am thy step-son;] and somewhat less than kind to thee, [for I hate thee, as being the person who has entered into an incestuous marriage with my mother]. Or, if we understand *kind* in its ancient sense, then the meaning will be,—*I am more than thy kinsman, for I am thy step-son*; being such, *I am less near to thee than thy natural offspring*, and therefore not entitled to the appellation of *son*, which you have now given me. *Malone.*

[5] —— *too much i' the sun.*] He perhaps alludes to the proverb, "Out of heaven's blessing into the warm sun." *Johnson.*

Meaning probably his being sent for from his studies to be exposed at his uncle's marriage as his *chiefest courtier*, &c. *Steevens.*

I question whether a quibble between *sun* and *son* be not here intended. *Farmer.*

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Queen. Good Hamlet, cast thy nighted colour off, nightlike
And let thine eye look like a friend on Denmark.
Do not, for ever, with thy vailed lids[6]
Seek for thy noble father in the dust:
Thou know'st, 'tis common; all, that live, must die,[7]
Passing through nature to eternity.
Ham. Ay, madam, it is common.
Queen. If it be,
Why seems it so particular with thee?
Ham. Seems, madam! nay, it is; I know not seems.
'Tis not alone my inky cloak, good mother,
Nor customary suits of solemn black,
Nor windy suspiration of forc'd breath,
No, nor the fruitful river in the eye,
Nor the dejected haviour of the visage,
Together with all forms, modes, shows of grief,
That can denote me truly: These, indeed, seem,
For they are actions that a man might play:
But I have that within, which passeth show;
These, but the trappings and the suits of woe.[8]
King. 'Tis sweet and commendable in your nature, Hamlet,
To give these mourning duties to your father:
But, you must know, your father lost a father;
That father lost, lost his;[9] and the survivor bound

[6] —— *vailed lids* —] With lowering eyes, cast down eyes. *Johnson.*

So, in *The Merchant of Venice:*

"*Vailing* her high-top lower than her ribs." *Steevens.*

See Vol. IX, p. 15, n. 2. *Malone.*

[7] *Thou know'st, 'tis common; all, that live, must die,*] Perhaps the semicolon placed in this line, is improper. The sense, elliptically expressed, is,—Thou knowest it is common *that* all that live, must die.—The first *that* is omitted for the sake of metre, a practice often followed by Shakspeare. *Steevens.*

[8] *But I have that within, which passeth show;*
These, but the trappings and the suits of woe.] So, in *King Richard II:*

"—— my grief lies all within;
"And these external manners of lament
"Are merely shadows to the unseen grief
"That swells with silence in the tortur'd soul." *Malone.*

[9] —— *Your father lost a father;*

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In filial obligation, for some term
To do obsequious sorrow:[1] But to persever
In obstinate condolement, is a course
Of impious stubbornness; 'tis unmanly grief:
It shows a will most incorrect[2] to heaven;
A heart unfortified, or mind impatient;
An understanding simple and unschool'd:
For what, we know, must be, and is as common
As any the most vulgar thing to sense,
Why should we, in our peevish opposition,
Take it to heart? Fy! 'tis a fault to heaven,
A fault against the dead, a fault to nature,
To reason most absurd;[3] whose common theme
Is death of fathers, and who still hath cried,

That father lost, lost his;] Mr. Pope judiciously corrected the faulty copies thus:

—— *your father lost a father;*
That father, his; ——.

On which the editor Mr. Theobald thus descants:—*This supposed refinement is from Mr. Pope, but all the editions else, that I have met with, old and modern, read:*

That father lost, lost *his;* ——

The reduplication of which word here gives an energy and an elegance WHICH IS MUCH EASIER TO BE CONCEIVED THAN EXPLAINED IN TERMS. I believe so: for when *explained in terms* it comes to this:—That father after he had lost himself, lost his father. But the reading is *ex fide codicis*, and that is enough. *Warburton.*

I do not admire the repetition of the word, but it has so much of our author's manner, that I find no temptation to recede from the old copies. *Johnson.*

The meaning of the passage is no more than this,—*Your father lost a father*, i. e. your grandfather, which *lost grandfather*, also lost his father.

The metre, however, in my opinion, shows that Mr. Pope's correction should be adopted. The sense, though elliptically expressed, will still be the same. *Steevens.*

[1] —— obsequious *sorrow:*] *Obsequious* is here from *obsequies*, or *funeral ceremonies*. *Johnson.*

So, in *Titus Andronicus:*

"To shed *obsequious* tears upon his trunk." *Steevens.*

[2] —— *a will most* incorrect —] Not sufficiently regulated by a sense of duty and submission to the dispensations of Providence. *Malone.*

[3] *To* reason *most absurd;*] *Reason* is here used in its common sense, for the *faculty* by which we form conclusions from arguments. *Johnson.*

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From the first corse, till he that died to-day,
This must be so. We pray you, throw to earth
This unprevailing woe; and think of us
As of a father: for let the world take note,
You are the most immediate to our throne;
And, with no less nobility of love,[4]
Than that which dearest father bears his son,
Do I impart toward you.[5] For your intent

[4] *And, with no less* nobility *of love,*] *Nobility,* for *magnitude.* *Warburton.*

Nobility is rather *generosity.* *Johnson.*

By nobility of love, Mr. Heath understands, eminence and distinction of love. *Malone.*

So, afterwards, the Ghost, describing his affection for the Queen:

"To me, whose *love was that of dignity*" &c. *Steevens.*

[5] *Do I impart toward you.*] I believe *impart* is, *impart myself, communicate* whatever I can bestow. *Johnson.*

The crown of Denmark was elective. So, in *Sir Clyomon, Knight of the Golden Shield,* &c. 1599:

"And me possess for spoused wife, who in *election* am
"To have the *crown of Denmark* here, as heir unto the same."

The king means, that as Hamlet stands the fairest chance to be next elected, he will strive with as much love to ensure the crown to him, as a father would show in the continuance of heirdom to a son. *Steevens.*

I agree with Mr. Steevens, that the crown of Denmark (as in most of the Gothick kingdoms) was elective, and not hereditary; though it must be customary, in elections, to pay some attention to the royal blood, which by degrees produced hereditary succession. Why then do the rest of the commentators so often treat Claudius as an *usurper,* who had deprived young Hamlet of his *right* by *heirship* to his father's crown? Hamlet calls him drunkard, murderer, and villain; one who had carried the election by low and mean practices; had—

"Popp'd in between the election and my hopes—."

had—

"From a shelf the precious diadem stole,
"And put it in his pocket:"

but never hints at his being an *usurper.* His discontent arose from his uncle's being preferred before him, not from any legal right which he pretended to set up to the crown. Some regard was probably had to the recommendation of the preceding prince, in electing the successor. And therefore young Hamlet had "the voice of the king himself for his succession in Denmark;" and he at his own death prophecies that "the election would light on Fortinbras, who had his dying voice," conceiving that by the death of his uncle, he himself had been king for

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In going back to school in Wittenberg,[6]
It is most retrograde to our desire:
And, we beseech you, bend you to remain[7]
Here, in the cheer and comfort of our eye,
Our chiefest courtier, cousin, and our son.

Queen. Let not thy mother lose her prayers, Hamlet;
I pray thee, stay with us, go not to Wittenberg.

Ham. I shall in all my best obey you, madam.

King. Why, 'tis a loving and a fair reply;
Be as ourself in Denmark.—Madam, come;
This gentle and unforc'd accord of Hamlet
Sits smiling to my heart:[8] in grace whereof,
No jocund health,[9] that Denmark drinks to-day,
But the great cannon to the clouds shall tell;
And the king's rouse[1] the heaven shall bruit again,

an instant, and had therefore a right to recommend. When, in the fourth Act, the rabble wished to choose Laertes king, I understand that antiquity was forgot, and custom violated, by electing a new king in the life-time of the old one, and perhaps also by the calling in a stranger to the royal blood. *Blackstone.*

6 —— *to school in Wittenberg,*] In Shakspeare's time there was an university at Wittenberg, to which he has made Hamlet propose to return.

The university of Wittenberg was not founded till 1502, consequently did not exist in the time to which this play is referred. *Malone.*

Our author may have derived his knowledge of this famous university from *The Life of Iacke Wilton*, 1594, or *The History of Doctor Faustus*, of whom the *second report* (printed in the same year) is said to be "written by an English gentleman, *student* at *Wittenberg*, an *University* of Germany in Saxony." *Ritson.*

7 —— *bend you to remain* —] i. e. subdue your inclination to go from hence, and remain, &c. *Steevens.*

8 *Sits smiling* to *my heart:*] Thus, the dying Lothario:
"That sweet revenge *comes smiling to my thoughts.*" *Steevens.*
Sits smiling to *my heart:*] Surely it should be:
Sits smiling on *my heart.* *Ritson.*
To my heart, I believe, signifies—*near to, close, next to,* my heart. *Steevens.*

9 *No jocund health,*] The King's intemperance is very strongly impressed; every thing that happens to him gives him occasion to drink. *Johnson.*

1 —— *the king's* rouse —] i. e. the king's draught of jollity. See *Othello*, Act II, sc. iii. *Steevens.*
So, in Marlowe's *Tragical Historie of Doctor Faustus:*
"He *tooke his rouse* with stoopes of *Rhennish* wine." *Ritson.*

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Re-speaking earthly thunder. Come away.
[*Exeunt* King, Queen, Lords, &c. POL. *and* LAER.
Ham. O, that this too too solid flesh would melt,
Thaw, and resolve itself into a dew![2]
Or that the Everlasting had not fix'd
His canon 'gainst self-slaughter![3] O God! O God!
How weary, stale, flat, and unprofitable
Seem to me all the uses of this world!
Fy on 't! O fy! 'tis an unweeded garden,
That grows to seed; things rank, and gross in nature,
Possess it merely.[4] That it should come to this!
But two months dead!—nay, not so much, not two:
So excellent a king; that was, to this,
Hyperion to a satyr:[5] so loving to my mother,

[2] —— resolve *itself into a dew!*] *Resolve* means the same as *dissolve*. Ben Jonson uses the word in his *Volpone*, and in the same sense:

"Forth the *resolved* corners of his eyes."

Again, in *The Country Girl*, 1647:

"—— my swoln grief, *resolved* in these tears."

Pope has employed the same word in his version of the second *Iliad*, 44:

"*Resolves* to air, and mixes with the night." *Steevens.*

[3] *Or that the Everlasting had not fix'd*
His canon *'gainst self-slaughter!*] The generality of the editions read—*cannon*, as if the poet's thought were,—Or *that the Almighty had not planted his* artillery, *or* arms *of* vengeance, *against self-murder*. But the word which I restored (and which was espoused by the accurate Mr. Hughes, who gave an edition of this play) is the true reading, i. e. *that he had not restrained suicide by his* express law and peremptory prohibition. *Theobald.*

There are yet those who suppose the old reading to be the true one, as they say the word *fixed* seems to decide very strongly in its favour. I would advise such to recollect Virgil's expression:

"—— *fixit* leges pretio, atque *refixit*." *Steevens.*

If the true reading wanted any support, it might be found in *Cymbeline*:

"—— *'gainst self-slaughter*
"There is a *prohibition* so divine,
"That cravens my weak hand."

In Shakspeare's time *canon* (*norma*) was commonly spelt *cannon*. *Malone.*

[4] —— *merely.*] is *entirely, absolutely*. See Vol. II, p. 12, n. 2; and *Coriolanus*, Act III, sc. i, Vol. XIII. *Steevens.*

[5] *So excellent a king; that was, to this,*
Hyperion *to a satyr:*] This similitude at first sight seems to

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That he might not beteem the winds of heaven[6]
Visit her face too roughly. Heaven and earth!
Must I remember? why, she would hang on him,

be a little far-fetched; but it has an exquisite beauty. By the *Satyr* is meant *Pan*, as by *Hyperion*, *Apollo*. *Pan* and *Apollo* were brothers, and the allusion is to the contention between those gods for the preference in musick. *Warburton.*

All our English poets are guilty of the same false quantity, and call Hypĕrīon Hypērīon; at least the only instance I have met with to the contrary, is in the old play of *Fuimus Troes*, 1633:

" —— Blow gentle Africus,
" Play on our poops, when Hypĕrīon's son
" Shall couch in west."

Shakspeare, I believe, has no allusion in the present instance, except to the beauty of Apollo, and its immediate opposite, the deformity of a Satyr. *Steevens.*

[6] *That he* might not beteem *the winds of heaven* —] In former editions:

That he permitted not *the winds of heaven* —.

This is a sophisticated reading, copied from the players in some of the modern editions, for want of understanding the poet, whose text is corrupt in the old impressions: all of which that I have had the fortune to see, concur in reading:

—— *so loving to my mother,*
That he might not beteene *the winds of heaven*
Visit her face too roughly.

Beteene is a corruption without doubt, but not so inveterate a one, but that, by the change of a single letter, and the separation of two words mistakenly jumbled together, I am verily persuaded, I have retrieved the poet's reading—

That he might not let e'en *the winds of heaven* &c.
Theobald.

The obsolete and corrupted verb—*beteene*, (in the first folio) which should be written (as in all the quartos) *beteeme*, was changed, as above, by Mr. Theobald; and with the aptitude of his conjecture succeeding criticks appear to have been satisfied.

Beteeme, however, occurs in the tenth Book of Arthur Golding's version of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, 4to. 1587; and, from the corresponding Latin, must necessarily signify, to *vouchsafe*, *deign*, *permit*, or *suffer*:

" —— Yet could he not *beteeme*
" The shape of anie other bird than egle for to seeme."
Sign. R. 1. b.

" —— nulla tamen alite verti
" *Dignatur*, nisi quæ possit sua fulmina ferre." V. 157.

Jupiter (though anxious for the possession of Ganymede) would not *deign* to assume a meaner form, or *suffer* change into an humbler shape, than that of the august and vigorous fowl who bears the thunder in his pounces.

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As if increase of appetite had grown
By what it fed on: And yet, within a month,—
Let me not think on 't;—Frailty, thy name is woman!—
A little month; or ere those shoes were old,
With which she follow'd my poor father's body,
Like Niobe, all tears;[7] —why she, even she,—
O heaven! a beast, that wants discourse of reason,
Would have mourn'd longer,—married with my uncle,
My father's brother; but no more like my father,
Than I to Hercules: Within a month;
Ere yet the salt of most unrighteous tears
Had left the flushing in her galled eyes,
She married:—O most wicked speed, to post
With such dexterity to incestuous sheets!
It is not, nor it cannot come to, good;
But break, my heart; for I must hold my tongue!

Enter HORATIO, BERNARDO, *and* MARCELLUS.

Hor. Hail to your lordship!

Ham. I am glad to see you well:
Horatio,—or I do forget myself.

Hor. The same, my lord, and your poor servant ever.

Ham. Sir, my good friend; I 'll change that name[8] with you.

The existence and signification of the verb *beteem* being thus established, it follows, that the attention of Hamlet's father to his queen was exactly such as is described in the Enterlude of the *Life and Repentaunce of Marie Magdalaine*, &c. by Lewis Wager, 4to. 1567:

" But evermore they were unto me very tender,
" They *would not suffer the wynde on me to blowe.*"

I have therefore replaced the ancient reading, without the slightest hesitation, in the text.

This note was inserted by me in *The Gentleman's Magazine*, some years before Mr. Malone's edition of our author (in which the same justification of the old reading—*beteeme*, occurs,) had made its appearance. *Steevens.*

[7] *Like Niobe, all tears;*] Shakspeare might have caught this idea from an ancient ballad entitled *The falling out of Lovers is the renewing of Love:*

" Now I, like weeping *Niobe*,
" May wash my handes in teares," &c.

Of this ballad *Amantium iræ* &c. is the burden. *Steevens.*

[8] —— *I 'll change that name* —] I 'll be your servant, you shall be my friend. *Johnson.*

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And what make you[9] from Wittenberg, Horatio?—
Marcellus?

Mar. My good lord, ——

Ham. I am very glad to see you; good even, sir.[1] —
But what, in faith, make you from Wittenberg?

Hor. A truant disposition, good my lord.

Ham. I would not hear your enemy say so;
Nor shall you do mine ear that violence,
To make it truster of your own report
Against yourself: I know, you are no truant.
But what is your affair in Elsinore?
We 'll teach you to drink deep, ere you depart.

Hor. My lord, I came to see your father's funeral.

Ham. I pray thee, do not mock me, fellow-student;
I think, it was to see my mother's wedding.

Hor. Indeed, my lord, it follow'd hard upon.

Ham. Thrift, thrift, Horatio! the funeral bak'd meats[2]

[9] —— *what make you* —] A familiar phrase for *what are you doing*. *Johnson.*
See Vol. V, p. 9, n. 4. *Steevens.*

[1] —— *good* even, *sir.*] So the copies. Sir Thomas Hanmer and Dr. Warburton put it—good *morning*. The alteration is of no importance, but all licence is dangerous. There is no need of any change. Between the first and eighth scene of this Act it is apparent, that a natural day must pass, and how much of it is already over, there is nothing that can determine. The King has held a council. It may now as well be *evening* as *morning*. *Johnson.*

The change made by Sir T. Hanmer might be justified by what Marcellus said of Hamlet at the conclusion of sc. i:

" —— and I this *morning* know
" Where we shall find him most convenient." *Steevens.*

[2] —— *the funeral bak'd meats* —] It was anciently the general custom to give a cold entertainment to mourners at a funeral. In distant counties this practice is continued among the yeomanry. See *The Tragique Historie of the Faire Valeria of London*, 1598: " His corpes was with funerall pompe conveyed to the church, and there sollemnly enterred, nothing omitted which necessitie or custom could claime; a sermon, a *banquet*, and like observations." Again, in the old romance of *Syr Degore*, bl. l. no date:

" A great *feaste* would he holde
" Upon his quenes mornynge day,
" That was buryed in an abbay." *Collins.*

See also, Hayward's *Life and Raigne of King Henrie the Fourth*, 4to. 1599, p. 135: " Then hee [King Richard II] was conveyed to Langley Abby in Buckinghamshire,—and there obscurely in-

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Did coldly furnish forth the marriage tables.
'Would I had met my dearest foe in heaven[3]
Or ever[4] I had seen that day, Horatio!—
My father,—Methinks, I see my father.
Hor. Where,
My lord?
Ham. In my mind's eye,[5] Horatio.
Hor. I saw him once, he was a goodly king.
Ham. He was a man, take him for all in all,
I shall not look upon his like again.[6]

terred,—without the charge of a *dinner* for celebrating the funeral." *Malone.*

[3] —— dearest *foe in heaven*—] *Dearest* for *direst*, most dreadful, most dangerous. *Johnson.*

Dearest is *most immediate, consequential, important.* So, in *Romeo and Juliet:*

" —— a ring that I must use
" In *dear* employment."

Again, in Beaumont and Fletcher's *Maid in the Mill:*

" You meet your *dearest* enemy in love,
" With all his hate about him." *Steevens.*

See *Timon of Athens*, Act V, sc. ii, Vol. XV. *Malone.*

[4] Or *ever*—] Thus the quarto, 1604. The folio reads—*ere* ever. This is not the only instance in which a familiar phraseology has been substituted for one more ancient, in that valuable copy. *Malone.*

[5] *In my mind's eye,*] This expression occurs again in our author's *Rape of Lucrece:*

" —— himself behind
" Was left unseen, save to *the eye of mind.*"

Again, in Chaucer's *Man of Lawes Tale:*

" But it were with thilke *eyen of his minde,*
" With which men mowen see whan they ben blinde."

Ben Jonson has borrowed it in his Masque called *Love's Triumph through Callipolis:*

" As only by *the mind's eye* may be seen."

Again, in the *Microcosmos* of John Davies of Hereford, 4to. 1605:

" And through their closed eies their *mind's eye* peeps."

Telemachus lamenting the absence of Ulysses, is represented in like manner:

" *Ὀσσόμενος πατέρ' ἐσθλὸν ἐνὶ φρεσὶν.*" *Odyss.* L. I, 115. *Steevens.*

This expression occurs again in our author's 113th Sonnet:

" Since I left you, mine *eye is in my mind.*" *Malone.*

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Hor. My lord, I think I saw him yesternight.
Ham. Saw! who?
Hor. My lord, the king your father.
Ham. The king my father!
Hor. Season your admiration[7] for a while
With an attent ear;[8] till I may deliver,
Upon the witness of these gentlemen,
This marvel to you.
Ham. For God's love, let me hear.
Hor. Two nights together had these gentlemen,
Marcellus and Bernardo, on their watch,
In the dead waist and middle of the night,[9]
Been thus encounter'd. A figure like your father,

[6] I *shall not look upon his like again.*] Mr. Holt proposes to read, from an emendation of Sir Thomas Samwell, Bart. of Upton, near Northampton:

Eye *shall not look upon his like again;*

and thinks it is more in the true spirit of Shakspeare than the other. So, in Stowe's *Chronicle*, p. 746: "In the greatest pomp that euer *eye* behelde." Again, in Sandys's *Travels*, p. 150: "We went this day through the most pregnant and pleasant valley that ever *eye* beheld."

Again, in Sidney's *Arcadia*, Lib. III, p. 293, edit. 1633:

"—— as cruell a fight as *eye* did ever see." *Steevens.*

[7] Season *your admiration* —] That is, *temper* it. *Johnson.*

[8] *With an* attent *ear;*] Spenser, as well as our poet, uses *attent* for *attentive*. *Malone.*

[9] *In the dead* waist *and middle of the night,*] This strange phraseology seems to have been common in the time of Shakspeare. By *waist* is meant nothing more than *middle;* and hence the epithet *dead* did not appear incongruous to our poet. So, in Marston's *Malecontent*, 1604:

"'Tis now about the immodest *waist* of *night.*"

i. e. midnight. Again, in *The Puritan*, a comedy, 1607: "— ere the day be spent to the *girdle*, —."

In the old copies the word is spelt *wast*, as it is in the second Act, sc. ii: "Then you live about her *wast*, or in the middle of her favours." The same spelling is found in *King Lear*, Act IV, sc. vi: "Down from the *wast*, they are centaurs." See also, Minsheu's Dict. 1617: "*Wast, middle*, or girdle-steed." We have the same pleonasm in another line in this play:

"And given my heart a working *mute* and *dumb.*"

All the modern editors read—In the dead *waste* &c. *Malone.*

Dead waste may be the true reading. See Vol. II, p. 35, n. 2. *Steevens.*

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Armed at point,[1] exactly, cap-à-pe,
Appears before them, and, with solemn march,
Goes slow and stately by them: thrice he walk'd,
By their oppress'd and fear-surprized eyes,
Within his truncheon's length; whilst they, "distill'd," *benchilled*
Almost to jelly with the act of fear,[2]
Stand dumb, and speak not to him. This to me
In dreadful secrecy impart they did;
And I with them, the third night kept the watch:
Where, as they had deliver'd, both in time,
Form of the thing, each word made true and good,
The apparition comes: I knew your father;
These hands are not more like.

Ham. But where was this?

Mar. My lord, upon the platform where we watch'd.

Ham. Did you not speak to it?[3]

[1] *Armed at point,*] Thus the quartos. The folio: *Arm'd at* all *points.* *Steevens.*

[2] —— *with the act of* fear,] *Fear* was the cause, the active cause that *distilled* them by the force of operation which we strictly call *act* in voluntary, and *power* in involuntary *agents*, but popularly call *act* in both. *Johnson.*

The folio reads—*best*il'd. *Steevens.*

[3] *Did you not* speak *to it?*] Fielding, who was well acquainted with vulgar superstitions, in his *Tom Jones*, B. XI, ch. ii, observes that Mrs. Fitzpatrick, "like a ghost, only wanted to be spoke to," but then very readily answered. It seems from this passage, as well as from others in books too mean to be formally quoted, that spectres were supposed to maintain an obdurate silence, till interrogated by the people to whom they appeared.

The drift therefore of Hamlet's question is, whether his father's shade had been spoken to; and not whether Horatio, as a particular or privileged person, was the speaker to it. Horatio tells us he had seen the late king but once, and therefore cannot be imagined to have any particular interest with his apparition.

The vulgar notion that a ghost could only be spoken to with propriety and effect by a scholar, agrees very well with the character of Marcellus, a common officer; but it would have disgraced the Prince of Denmark to have supposed the spectre would more readily comply with Horatio's solicitation, merely because it was that of a man who had been studying at a university.

We are at liberty to think the Ghost would have replied to Francisco, Bernardo, or Marcellus, had either of them ventured to question it. It was actually preparing to address Horatio, when the cock crew. The convenience of Shakspeare's play, however, required that the phantom should continue dumb till

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Hor. My lord, I did;
But answer made it none: yet once, methought,
It lifted up its head, and did address
Itself to motion, like as it would speak:
But, even then, the morning cock crew loud;[4]
And at the sound it shrunk in haste away,
And vanish'd from our sight.
Ham. 'Tis very strange.
Hor. As I do live, my honour'd lord, 'tis true;
And we did think it writ down in our duty,
To let you know of it.
Ham. Indeed, indeed, sirs, but this troubles me.
Hold you the watch to-night?
All. We do, my lord.
Ham. Arm'd, say you?
All. Arm'd, my lord.

Hamlet could be introduced to hear what was to remain concealed in his own breast, or to be communicated by him to some intelligent friend, like Horatio, in whom he could implicitly confide.

By what particular person, therefore, an apparition which exhibits itself only for the purpose of being urged to speak, was addressed, could be of no consequence.

Be it remembered likewise, that the words are not as lately pronounced on the stage,—"Did not *you* speak to it?"—but—"Did you not *speak* to it?"—How aukward will the innovated sense appear, if attempted to be produced from the passage as it really stands in the true copies!

Did you *not speak to it?*

The emphasis, therefore, should most certainly rest on—*speak*.

Steevens.

[4] —— *the morning cock crew loud;*] The moment of the evanescence of spirits was supposed to be limited to the crowing of the cock. This belief is mentioned so early as by Prudentius, *Cathem. Hymn.* I, v. 40. But some of his commentators prove it to be of much higher antiquity.

It is a most inimitable circumstance in Shakspeare, so to have managed this popular idea, as to make the Ghost, which has been so long obstinately silent, and of course must be dismissed by the morning, begin or rather prepare to speak, and to be interrupted, at the very critical time of the crowing of a cock.

Another poet, according to custom, would have suffered his Ghost tamely to vanish, without contriving this start, which is like a start of guilt. To say nothing of the aggravation of the future suspense, occasioned by this preparation to speak, and to impart some mysterious secret. Less would have been expected, had nothing been promised. *T. Warton.*

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Ham. From top to toe?
All. My lord, from head to foot.
Ham. Then saw you not
His face.
Hor. O, yes, my lord; he wore his beaver up.[5]
Ham. What, look'd he frowningly?
Hor. A countenance more
In sorrow than in anger.
Ham. Pale, or red?
Hor. Nay, very pale.
Ham. And fix'd his eyes upon you?
Hor. Most constantly.
Ham. I would, I had been there.
Hor. It would have much amaz'd you.
Ham. Very like,
Very like: Stay'd it long?
Hor. While one with moderate haste might tell a hundred.
Mar. Ber. Longer, longer.
Hor. Not when I saw it.
Ham. His beard was grizzl'd? no?
Hor. It was, as I have seen it in his life,
A sable silver'd.[6]
Ham. I will watch to-night;
Perchance, 'twill walk again.
Hor. I warrant, it will.
Ham. If it assume my noble father's person,
I 'll speak to it, though hell itself should gape,

[5] —— *wore his* beaver up.] Though *beaver* properly signified that part of the helmet which was *let down*, to enable the wearer to drink, Shakspeare always uses the word as denoting that part of the helmet which, when raised up, exposed the face of the wearer: and such was the popular signification of the word in his time. In Bullokar's *English Expositor*, 8vo. 1616, *beaver* is defined thus:—"In armour it signifies that part of the helmet which may be *lifted up*, to take breath the more freely." *Malone.*

So, in Laud's *Diary*: "The Lord Broke shot in the left eye, and killed in the place at Lichfield—his *bever up*, and armed to the knee, so that a musket at that distance could have done him little harm." *Farmer.*

[6] *A sable silver'd.*] So, in our poet's 12th Sonnet:
"And *sable curls*, all *silver'd* o'er with white." *Malone.*

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And bid me hold my peace. I pray you all,
If you have hitherto conceal'd this sight,
Let it be tenable in your silence still;[7]
And whatsoever else shall hap to-night,
Give it an understanding, but no tongue;
I will requite your loves: So, fare you well:
Upon the platform, 'twixt eleven and twelve,
I 'll visit you.

All. Our duty to your honour.

Ham. Your loves, as mine to you: Farewel.

[*Exeunt* HOR. MAR. *and* BER.

My father's spirit in arms![8] all is not well;
I doubt some foul play: 'would, the night were come!
Till then sit still, my soul: Foul deeds will rise,
Though all the earth o'erwhelm them, to men's eyes.

[*Exit.*

SCENE III.

A Room in Polonius' *House.*

Enter LAERTES *and* OPHELIA.

Laer. My necessaries are embark'd; farewell:
And, sister, as the winds give benefit,
And convoy is assistant, do not sleep,
But let me hear from you.

Oph. Do you doubt that?

Laer. For Hamlet, and the trifling of his favour,
Hold it a fashion, and a toy in blood;
A violet in the youth of primy nature,
Forward, not permanent, sweet, not lasting,
The pérfume and suppliance of a minute;[9]
No more.

[7] *Let it be* tenable *in your silence still;*] Thus the quartos, and rightly. The folio, 1623, reads—*treble. Steevens.*

[8] *My father's spirit in arms!*] From what went before, I once hinted to Mr. Garrick, that these words might be spoken in this manner:

My father's spirit! in arms! all is not well; —. Whalley.

[9] *The* pérfume and suppliance *of a minute;*] Thus the quarto, the folio has it:

—— *sweet, not lasting,*
The suppliance of a minute.

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Oph. No more but so?
Laer. Think it no more:
For nature, crescent, does not grow alone
In thews,[1] and bulk; but, as this temple waxes,
The inward service of the mind and soul
Grows wide withal. Perhaps, he loves you now;
And now no soil, nor cautel, doth besmirch
The virtue of his will:[2] but, you must fear,
His greatness weigh'd, his will is not his own;

It is plain that *perfume* is necessary to exemplify the idea of *sweet, not lasting*. With the word *suppliance* I am not satisfied, and yet dare hardly offer what I imagine to be right. I suspect that *soffiance*, or some such word, formed from the Italian, was then used for the act of fumigating with sweet scents. *Johnson.*

The perfume and suppliance *of a minute;*] i. e. what was supplied to us for a minute; or, as Mr. M. Mason supposes, "an amusement to fill up a vacant moment, and render it agreeable." This word occurs in Chapman's version of the ninth *Iliad*, of Homer:

"—— by my *suppliance* given." *Steevens.*

The words—*perfume and*, which are found in the quarto, 1604, were omitted in the folio. *Malone.*

[1] *In* thews,] i. e. in sinews, muscular strength. So, in *King Henry IV*, p. 2: "Care I for the limb, the *thewes*, the stature," &c. See Vol. IX. p. 102, n. 3. *Steevens.*

[2] *And now no soil, nor* cautel, *doth besmirch*
The virtue *of his will:*] From *cautela*, which signifies only a *prudent foresight* or caution; but, passing through French hands, it lost its innocence, and now signifies *fraud, deceit*. And so he uses the adjective in *Julius Cæsar:*

"Swear priests and cowards, and men *cautelous*."
Warburton.

So, in the second part of Greene's *Art of Coneycatching*, 1592: "— and their subtill *cautels* to amend the statute. *To amend the statute*, was the cant phrase for evading the law. *Steevens.*

Cautel is subtlety or deceit. Minsheu in his Dictionary, 1617, defines it, "A crafty way to deceive." The word is again used by Shakspeare, in *A Lover's Complaint:*

"In him a plenitude of subtle matter,
"Applied to *cautels*, all strange forms receives." *Malone.*

Virtue seems here to comprise both *excellence* and *power*, and may be explained the *pure effect*. *Johnson.*

The *virtue of his will* means, his *virtuous intentions*. *Cautel* means *craft*. So, Coriolanus says:

"—— be caught by *cautelous* baits and practice."
M. Mason.

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For he himself is subject to his birth:[3]
He may not, as unvalued persons do,
Carve for himself; for on his choice depends
The safety and the health of the whole state;[4]
And therefore must his choice be circumscrib'd
Unto the voice and yielding of that body,
Whereof he is the head: Then if he says, he loves you,
It fits your wisdom so far to believe it,
As he in his particular act and place
May give his saying deed;[5] which is no further,
Than the main voice of Denmark goes withal.
Then weigh what loss your honour may sustain,
If with too credent ear you list his songs;
Or lose your heart; or your chaste treasure open
To his unmaster'd[6] importunity.
Fear it, Ophelia, fear it, my dear sister;
And keep you in the rear of your affection,[7]
Out of the shot and danger of desire.
The chariest maid[8] is prodigal enough,
If she unmask her beauty to the moon:
Virtue itself scapes not calumnious strokes:
The canker galls the infants of the spring,
Too oft before their buttons be disclos'd;
And in the morn and liquid dew of youth

[3] *For he himself*, &c.] This line is not in the quarto. *Malone.*

[4] *The* safety *and* the *health of the whole state;*] Thus the quarto, 1604, except that it has—*this* whole state, and the second *the* is inadvertently omitted. The folio reads:

The sanctity *and health of the whole state.*

This is another proof of arbitrary alterations being sometimes made in the folio. The editor, finding the metre defective, in consequence of the article being omitted before *health*, instead of supplying it, for *safety* substituted a word of three syllables. *Malone.*

[5] *May give his* saying deed;] So, in *Timon of Athens*: "— the *deed* of *saying* is quite out of use." Again, in *Troilus and Cressida*: "*Speaking in deeds*, and deedless in his tongue." *Malone.*

[6] —— *unmaster'd* —] i. e. *licentious. Johnson.*

[7] —— *keep you in the rear* &c.] That is, do not advance so far as your affection would lead you. *Johnson.*

[8] *The* chariest *maid* —] *Chary* is cautious. So, in Greene's *Never too Late*, 1616: "Love requires not chastity, but that her soldiers be *chary*." Again: "She liveth chastly enough, that liveth *charily*." *Steevens.*

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Contagious blastments are most imminent.
Be wary then: best safety lies in fear;
Youth to itself rebels, though none else near.
Oph. I shall the effect of this good lesson keep,
As watchman to my heart: But, good my brother,
Do not, as some ungracious pastors do,
Show me the steep and thorny way to heaven;
Whilst, like a puff'd and reckless libertine,
Himself the primrose path of dalliance treads,
And recks not his own read.[9]
Laer. O fear me not.
I stay too long;—But here my father comes.

Enter POLONIUS.

A double blessing is a double grace;
Occasion smiles upon a second leave.
Pol. Yet here, Laertes! aboard, aboard, for shame;
The wind sits in the shoulder of your sail,[1]
And you are staid for: There,—my blessing with you;
[*Laying his Hand on* LAERTES' *Head.*
And these few precepts in thy memory
Look thou charácter.[2] Give thy thoughts no tongue,
Nor any unproportion'd thought his act.
Be thou familiar, but by no means vulgar.
The friends thou hast, and their adoption tried,

[9] —— recks *not his own* read.] That is, heeds not his own lessons. *Pope.*
So, in the old Morality of *Hycke Scorner:*
" —— I *reck* not a feder."
Again, *ibidem:*
" And of thy living, I *reed* amend thee."
Again, the old proverb, in *The Two Angry Women of Abington,* 1599:
" Take heed, is a good *reed.*"
i. e. good *counsel,* good *advice. Steevens.*

[1] —— *the shoulder of your sail,*] This is a common sea phrase. *Steevens.*

[2] *And these few precepts in thy* memory
Look thou charácter,] i. e. write; strongly infix. The same phrase occurs in *The Two Gentlemen of Verona:*
" —— I do conjure thee,
" Who art the table wherein all my thoughts
" Are visibly *charácter'd* and engrav'd." *Malone.*

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Grapple them to thy soul with hooks of steel;[3]
But do not dull thy palm with entertainment
Of each new-hatch'd, unfledg'd comrade.[4] Beware
Of entrance to a quarrel; but, being in,
Bear it that the opposer may beware of thee.
Give every man thine ear, but few thy voice:
Take each man's censure,[5] but reserve thy judgment.
Costly thy habit as thy purse can buy,
But not express'd in fancy; rich, not gaudy:
For the apparel oft proclaims the man;[6]
And they in France, of the best rank and station,
Are most select and generous, chief in that.[7]

[3] *Grapple them to thy soul with* hooks *of steel;*] The old copies read—with *hoops* of steel. I have no doubt that this was a corruption in the original quarto of 1604, arising, like many others, from similitude of sounds. The emendation, which was made by Mr. Pope, and adopted by three subsequent editors, is strongly supported by the word *grapple*. See Minsheu's *Dict.* 1617: "To *hook* or *grapple*, viz. to grapple and to board a ship."

A *grapple* is an instrument with several *hooks* to lay hold of a ship, in order to board it.

This correction is also justified by our poet's 137th Sonnet:

"Why of eyes' falshood hast thou forged *hooks*,
"Whereto the judgement of my heart is *ty'd?*"

It may be also observed, that *hooks* are sometimes made of steel, but *hoops* never. *Malone.*

We have, however, in *King Henry IV*, P. II:

"A *hoop* of gold to bind thy brothers in."

The former part of the phrase occurs also in *Macbeth:*

"*Grapples* you to the heart and love of us." *Steevens.*

[4] *But do not dull thy palm with entertainment*
Of each new-hatch'd, unfledg'd comrade.] The literal sense is, *Do not make thy palm callous by shaking every man by the hand.* The figurative meaning may be, *Do not by promiscuous conversation make thy mind insensible to the difference of characters.* *Johnson.*

[5] —— *each man's* censure,] *Censure* is opinion. So, in *King Henry VI*, P. II:

"The king is old enough to give his *censure.*" *Steevens.*

[6] *For the apparel oft proclaims the man;*] "*A man's attire*, and excessive laughter, and gait, *shew what he is.*" *Ecclus* XIX, ver. 30. *Todd.*

[7] *Are most select and generous*, chief *in that.*] I think the whole design of the precept shows that we should read:

Are most select, and generous chief, in that.

Chief may be an *adjective* used *adverbially*, a practice common

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Neither a borrower, nor a lender be:
For loan oft loses both itself and friend;
And borrowing dulls the edge of husbandry.[8]
This above all,—To thine ownself be true;
And it must follow, as the night the day,[9]
Thou canst not then be false to any man.
Farewel; my blessing season this in thee![1]

Laer. Most humbly do I take my leave, my lord.

Pol. The time invites you;[2] go, your servants tend.[3]

Laer. Farewel, Ophelia; and remember well
What I have said to you.

Oph. 'Tis in my memory lock'd,
And you yourself shall keep the key of it.[4]

to our author: *chiefly* generous. Yet it must be owned that the punctuation recommended is very stiff and harsh.

I would, however, more willingly read:

And they in France, of the best rank and station,
Select and generous, are most choice *in that.*

Let the reader, who can discover the slightest approach towards sense, harmony, or metre, in the original line,—

Are of *a most select and generous chief, in that,*—

adhere to the old copies. *Steevens.*

The genuine meaning of the passage requires us to point the line thus:

Are most select and generous, chief in that.

i. e. the nobility of France are select and generous above all other nations, and chiefly in the point of apparel; the richness and elegance of their dress. *Ritson.*

[8] —— *of* husbandry,] i. e. of thrift; œconomical prudence. See Vol. VII, p. 78, n. 9. *Malone.*

[9] *And it must follow, as the* night *the* day,] So, in the 145th Sonnet of Shakspeare:

"That follow'd it *as gentle day*
"*Doth follow night,*" &c. *Steevens.*

[1] —— *my blessing* season *this in thee!*] *Season* for *infuse.* *Warburton.*

It is more than to *infuse*, it is to infix it in such a manner as that it never may wear out. *Johnson.*

So, in the mock tragedy represented before the king:

"—— who in want a hollow friend doth try,
"Directly *seasons* him his enemy." *Steevens.*

[2] *The time* invites *you;*] So, in *Macbeth:*

"I go, and it is done, the bell *invites* me." *Steevens.*

[3] —— *your servants* tend.] i. e. your servants are waiting for you. *Johnson.*

[4] —— *yourself shall keep the key of it,*] The meaning is, that

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Laer. Farewel. [*Exit* LAER.

Pol. What is 't, Ophelia, he hath said to you?

Oph. So please you, something touching the lord Hamlet.

Pol. Marry, well bethought:
'Tis told me, he hath very oft of late
Given private time to you; and you yourself
Have of your audience been most free and bounteous:
If it be so, (as so 'tis put on me,
And that in way of caution,) I must tell you,
You do not understand yourself so clearly,
As it behoves my daughter, and your honour:
What is between you? give me up the truth.

Oph. He hath, my lord, of late, made many tenders
Of his affection to me.

Pol. Affection? puh! you speak like a green girl,
Unsifted in such perilous circumstance.[5]
Do you believe his tenders, as you call them?

Oph. I do not know, my lord, what I should think.

Pol. Marry, I 'll teach you: think yourself a baby;
That you have ta'en these tenders for true pay,
Which are not sterling. Tender yourself more dearly;
Or (not to crack the wind of the poor phrase,
Wronging it thus,) you 'll tender me a fool.[6]

your counsels are as sure of remaining locked up in my memory, as if yourself carried the key of it. So, in *Northward Hoe*, by Decker and Webster, 1607: "You shall close it up like a treasure of your own, and yourself *shall keep the key of it.*" *Steevens.*

[5] Unsifted *in such perilous circumstance.*] *Unsifted* for *untried. Untried* signifies either not *tempted*, or not *refined; unsifted* signifies the *latter* only, though the sense requires the *former*. *Warburton.*

It means, I believe, one who has not sufficiently considered, or thoroughly sifted such matters. *M. Mason.*

I do not think that the sense requires us to understand *untempted.* "Unsifted in," &c. means, I think, one who has not nicely *canvassed* and examined the peril of her situation. *Malone.*

That *sifted* means *tempted*, may be seen in the 31st verse of the 22d chapter of St. Luke's gospel. *Harris.*

[6] ——— *Tender yourself more dearly;*
Or (*not to crack the wind of the poor phrase,*
Wronging *it thus,*) *you 'll tender me a fool.*] The *parenthesis* is closed at the wrong place; and we must have likewise a slight correction in the last verse. [*Wringing* it, &c.] Polonius is racking

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Oph. My lord, he hath impórtun'd me with love,
In honourable fashion.

Pol. Ay, fashion you may call it;[7] go to, go to.

Oph. And hath given countenance to his speech, my lord,
With almost all the holy vows of heaven.

Pol. Ay, springes to catch woodcocks.[8] I do know,
When the blood burns, how prodigal the soul
Lends the tongue vows: these blazes, daughter,[9]

and playing on the word *tender*, till he thinks proper to correct himself for the licence; and then he would say—not farther to crack the wind of the phrase, by *twisting* it and *contorting* it, as I have done. *Warburton.*

I believe the word *wronging* has reference, not to the phrase, but to Ophelia; if you go on *wronging it thus*, that is, *if you continue to go on thus wrong*. This is a mode of speaking perhaps not very grammatical, but very common; nor have the best writers refused it.

"To sinner it, or saint it,"

is in Pope. And Rowe,

"—— Thus to *coy it*,
"With one who knows you too."

The folio has it—*Roaming* it thus. That is, *letting yourself loose to such improper liberty*. But *wronging* seems to be more proper. *Johnson.*

I have followed the punctuation of the first quarto, 1604, where the parenthesis is extended to the word *thus*, to which word the context in my apprehension clearly shows it should be carried. "Or (not to crack the wind of the poor phrase, playing upon it, and abusing it thus,") &c. So, in *The Rape of Lucrece:*

"To *wrong* the wronger, till he render right."

The quarto, by the mistake of the compositor, reads—*Wrong* it thus. The correction was made by Mr. Pope.

—— Tender *yourself more dearly;*] To *tender* is to regard with affection. So, in *King Richard II:*

"—— And so betide me,
"As well I *tender* you and all of yours."

Again, in *The Maydes Metamorphosis*, by Lyly, 1601:

"—— if you account us for the same
"That *tender* thee, and love Apollo's name." *Malone.*

[7] —— fashion *you may call it;*] She uses *fashion* for *manner*, and he for a *transient practice*. *Johnson.*

[8] —— *springes to catch woodcocks,*] A proverbial saying, "Every woman has a *springe to catch a woodcock*." *Steevens.*

[9] —— *these blazes, daughter,*] Some epithet to *blazes* was probably omitted, by the carelessness of the transcriber or composi-

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Giving more light than heat,—extinct in both,
Even in their promise, as it is a making,—
You must not take for fire. From this time,
Be somewhat scanter of your maiden presence;
Set your entreatments[1] at a higher rate,
Than a command to parly. For lord Hamlet,
Believe so much in him, That he is young;
And with a larger tether[2] may he walk,
Than may be given you: In few, Ophelia,
Do not believe his vows: for they are brokers[3]
Not of that die which their investments show,
But mere implorators of unholy suits,
Breathing like sanctified and pious bonds,[4]

tor, in the first quarto, in consequence of which the metre is defective. *Malone.*

[1] *Set your* entreatments —] *Entreatments* here mean *company, conversation,* from the French *entrétien. Johnson.*

Entreatments, I rather think, means the objects of *entreaty;* the favours for which lovers sue. In the next scene we have a word of a similar formation:

" As if it some *impartment* did desire," &c. *Malone.*

[2] —— *larger* tether —] A string to tie horses. *Pope.*

Tether is that string by which an animal, set to graze in grounds uninclosed, is confined within the proper limits. *Johnson.*

So, in Greene's *Card of Fancy,* 1601:—" To tie the ape and the bear in one *tedder.*" *Tether* is a string by which any animal is fastened, whether for the sake of feeding or the air. *Steevens.*

[3] *Do not believe his* vows, *for they are* brokers —] A *broker* in old English meant a *bawd* or *pimp.* See the Glossary to Gawin Douglas's translation of *Virgil.* So, in *King John:*

" This *bawd,* this *broker,*" &c.

See also, Vol. XII, p. 196, n. 1. In our author's *Lover's Complaint* we again meet with the same expression, applied in the same manner:

" Know, *vows* are ever *brokers* to defiling." *Malone.*

[4] *Breathing like sanctified and pious* bonds,] On which the editor, Mr. Theobald, remarks, *Though all the editors have swallowed this reading implicitly, it is certainly corrupt; and I have been surprized how men of genius and learning could let it pass without some suspicion. What idea can we frame to ourselves of a breathing bond, or of its being sanctified and pious,* &c. But he was too hasty in *framing ideas* before he understood those already framed by the poet, and expressed in very plain words. Do not believe (says Polonius to his daughter) Hamlet's amorous vows made *to you;* which pretend religion in them, (*the better to beguile*) like those

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The better to beguile. This is for all,—
I would not, in plain terms, from this time forth,
Have you so slander any moment's leisure,[8]
As to give words or talk with the lord Hamlet.
Look to 't, I charge you; come your ways.
Oph. I shall obey, my lord. [*Exeunt.*

sanctified and pious vows [*or bonds*] made *to heaven.* And why should not this *pass without suspicion? Warburton.*

Theobald for *bonds* substitutes *bawds. Johnson.*

Notwithstanding Warburton's elaborate explanation of this passage, I have not the least doubt but Theobald is right, and that we ought to read *bawds* instead of *bonds.* Indeed the present reading is little better than nonsense.

Polonius had called Hamlet's vows, *brokers,* but two lines before, a synonymous word to *bawds,* and the very title that Shakspeare gives to Pandarus, in his *Troilus and Cressida.* The words *implorators of unholy suits,* are an exact description of a *bawd;* and all such of them as are crafty in their trade, put on the appearance of sanctity, and are "not of that die which their investments show." *M. Mason.*

The old reading is undoubtedly the true one. Do not, says Polonius, believe his vows, for they are merely uttered for the purpose of persuading you to yield to a criminal passion, though they appear only the genuine effusions of a pure and lawful affection, and assume the semblance of those sacred engagements entered into at the altar of wedlock. The *bonds* here in our poet's thoughts were *bonds of love.* So, in his 142d Sonnet:

"——— those lips of thine,
"That have profan'd their scarlet ornaments,
"And seal'd false *bonds of love,* as oft as mine."

Again, in *The Merchant of Venice:*

"O, ten times faster Venus' pigeons fly,
"To seal *love's bonds* new made, than they are wont
"To keep obliged faith unforfeited."

"Sanctified and pious bonds," are the *true bonds of love,* or, as our poet has elsewhere expressed it:

"A contract and *eternal bond of love.*"

Dr. Warburton certainly misunderstood this passage; and when he triumphantly asks "may not this pass without suspicion?" if he means his own comment, the answer is, because it is not perfectly accurate. *Malone.*

[8] *I would not,* in plain terms, *from this time forth,*
Have you so slander any moment's leisure,] Polonius says, *in plain terms,* that is, not in language less elevated or embellished than before, but *in terms that cannot be misunderstood: I would not have you so disgrace your most idle moments, as not to find better employment for them than lord Hamlet's conversation. Johnson.*

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SCENE IV.

The Platform.

Enter HAMLET, HORATIO, *and* MARCELLUS.

Ham. The air bites shrewdly; it is very cold.
Hor. It is a nipping and an eager air.[6]
Ham. What hour now?
Hor. I think, it lacks of twelve.
Mar. No, it is struck.
Hor. Indeed? I heard it not; it then draws near the season,
Wherein the spirit held his wont to walk. [*A Flourish of Trumpets, and Ordnance shot off, within.*
What does this mean, my lord?
Ham. The king doth wake to-night, and takes his rouse,[7]
Keeps wassel,[8] and the swaggering up-spring[9] reels;

[6] —— *an* eager *air,*] That is, a sharp air, *aigre*, Fr. So, in a subsequent scene:
"And curd, like *eager* droppings into milk." *Malone.*

[7] —— *takes his* rouse,] A *reuse* is a large dose of liquor, a debauch. So, in *Othello*: "—they have given me a *rouse* already." It should seem from the following passage in Decker's *Gul's Horn-book*, 1609, that the word *rouse* was of Danish extraction: "Teach me, thou soveraigne skinker, how to take the German's upsy freeze, the *Danish rousa*, the Switzer's stoop of rhenish," &c. *Steevens.*

[8] *Keeps* wassel,] See Vol. VII. p. 74, n. 8. Again, in *The Hog hath lost his Pearl*, 1614:
"By Croesus name and by his castle,
"Where winter nights he *keepeth wassel.*"
i. e. devotes his nights to jollity. *Steevens.*

[9] —— *the swaggering* up-spring —] The blustering upstart. *Johnson.*

It appears from the following passage, in *Alphonsus, Emperor of Germany*, by Chapman, that the *up-spring* was a *German dance*:
"We Germans have no changes in our dances;
"An *almain* and an *up-spring*, that is all."
Spring was anciently the name of a tune: so in Beaumont and Fletcher's *Prophetess*:
"—— we will meet him,
"And strike him such new *springs*—."
This word is used by G. Douglas in his translation of Virgil, and, I think, by Chaucer. Again, in an old Scots proverb: "Another would play a *spring*, ere you tune your pipes." *Steevens.*

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And, as he drains his draughts of Rhenish down,
The kettle-drum and trumpet thus bray out[1]
The triumph of his pledge.
Hor. Is it a custom?
Ham. Ay, marry, is 't:
But to my mind,—though I am native here,
And to the manner born,—it is a custom
More honour'd in the breach, than the observance.
This heavy-headed revel, east and west,[2]
Makes us traduc'd, and tax'd of other nations:
They clepe us, drunkards,[3] and with swinish phrase
Soil our addition; and, indeed it takes
From our achievements, though perform'd at height,

[1] ——*thus* bray *out*—] So, in Chapman's version of the 5th *Iliad*:
" —— he laid out such a throat
" As if nine or ten thousand men had *brayd* out all their breaths
" In one confusion." *Steevens.*

[2] *This* heavy-headed *revel*, east *and* west,] This heavy-headed revel makes us traduced east and west, and taxed of other nations. *Johnson.*

By *east and west*, as Mr. Edwards has observed, is meant, throughout the world; *from one end of it to the other.*—This and the following twenty-one lines have been restored from the quarto. *Malone.*

[3] *They clepe us, drunkards,*] And well our Englishmen might; for in Queen Elizabeth's time there was a *Dane* in London, of whom the following mention is made in a collection of characters entitled, *Looke to it, for Ile stab ye*, no date:
" You that will drinke *Keynaldo* unto deth,
" The *Dane* that would carowse out of his boote."

Mr. M. Mason adds, that " it appears from one of Howell's letters, dated at Hamburgh in the year 1632, that the then King of Denmark had not degenerated from his jovial predecessor.—In his account of an entertainment given by his majesty to the Earl of Leicester, he tells us, that the king, after beginning thirty-five toasts, was carried away in his chair, and that all the officers of the court were drunk." *Steevens.*

See also the *Nugæ Antiquæ*, Vol. II, p. 133, for the scene of drunkenness introduced into the court of James I, by the King of Denmark, in 1606.

Roger Ascham in one of his Letters, mentions being present at an entertainment where the Emperor of Germany seemed in drinking to rival the King of Denmark: " The Emperor, (says he) drank the best that ever I saw; he had his head in the glass five times as long as any of us, and never drank less than *a good quart at once of Rhenish wine.*" *Reed.*

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The pith and marrow of our attribute.[4]
So, oft it chances in particular men,
That, for some vicious mole of nature in them,
As, in their birth, (wherein they are not guilty,
Since nature cannot choose his origin,)[5]
By the o'ergrowth of some complexion,[6]
Oft breaking down the pales and forts of reason;
Or by some habit, that too much o'er-leavens
The form of plausive manners;[7]—that these men,—
Carrying, I say, the stamp of one defect;
Being nature's livery, or fortune's star,[8] —

[4] *The pith and marrow of our attribute.*] The best and most valuable part of the praise that would be otherwise attributed to us. *Johnson.*

[5] *That, for some vicious* mole *of nature in them,*
As, in their birth, (*wherein* they are not guilty,
Since nature *cannot choose his origin,*)] We have the same sentiment in *The Rape of Lucrece:*

"For *marks* descried in man's nativity
"Are nature's fault, not their own infamy."

Mr. Theobald, without necessity, altered *mole* to *mould.* The reading of the old copies is fully supported by a passage in *King John:*

"Patch'd with foul *moles,* and eye-offending marks."
Malone.

[6] —— *complexion,*] i. e. humour; as sanguine, melancholy, phlegmatick, &c. *Warburton.*

The quarto, 1604, for *the* has *their;* as a few lines lower it has *his* virtues, instead of *their* virtues. The correction was made by Mr. Theobald. *Malone.*

[7] —— *that too much* o'er-leavens
The form of plausive *manners;*] That intermingles too much with their manners; infects and *corrupts* them. See *Cymbeline,* Act III, sc. iv. *Plausive* in our poet's age signified gracious, pleasing, popular. So, in *All's Well that Ends Well:*

"—— his *plausive* words
"He scatter'd not in ears, but grafted them,
"To grow there, and to bear."

Plausible, in which sense *plausive* is here used, is defined by Cawdey, in his *Alphabetical Table,* &c. 1604: "*Pleasing,* or received joyfully and willingly." *Malone.*

[8] ——*fortune's* star,] The word *star* in the text signifies a *scar* of that appearance. It is a term of *farriery:* the *white star* or mark so common on the forehead of a dark coloured horse, is usually produced by making a *scar* on the place. *Ritson.*

——*fortune's* star,] Some accidental blemish, the consequence of *the overgrowth of some complexion* or humour allotted to us by

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Their virtues else (be they as pure as grace,
As infinite as man may undergo,)[9]
Shall in the general censure take corruption
From that particular fault: The dram of base
Doth all the noble substance often dout,
To his own scandal.[1]

fortune at our birth, or some vicious habit accidentally acquired afterwards.

Theobald, plausibly enough, would read—fortune's *scar*. The emendation may be supported by a passage in *Antony and Cleopatra*:

" The *scars* upon your honour therefore he
" Does pity as constrained *blemishes*,
" Not as deserv'd." *Malone*.

9 *As infinite as man may* undergo,)] As large as can be accumulated upon man. *Johnson*.

So, in *Measure for Measure*:

" To *undergo* such ample grace and honour,—." *Steevens*.

1 ——— *The dram of* base
Doth all the noble substance often dout,
To his *own scandal*.] I once proposed to read—*Doth all the noble substance* (i. e. the sum of good qualities) *oft do out*. We should now say,—To *its* own scandal; but *his* and *its* are perpetually confounded in the old copies.

As I understand the passage, there is little difficulty in it. This is one of the phrases which at present are neither employed in writing, nor perhaps are reconcileable to propriety of language.

To *do a thing out*, is *to extinguish it*, or *to efface* or *obliterate any thing painted or written*.

In the first of these significations it is used by Drayton, in the 5th Canto of his *Barons' Wars*:

" Was ta'en in battle, and his eyes *out-done*."

My conjecture—*do out*, instead of *dout*, might have received support from the pronunciation of this verb in Warwickshire, where they always say—" *dout* the candle,"—" *dout* the fire;" i. e. put out or extinguish them. The forfex by which a candle is extinguished is also there called—*a douter*.

Dout, however, is a word formed by the coalescence of two others,—(*do* and *out*) like *don* for *do on*, *doff* for *do off*, both of which are used by Shakspeare.

The word in question (and with the same blunder in spelling) has already occurred in the ancient copies in *King Henry V*:

" ——— make incision in their hides,
" That their hot blood may spin in English eyes,
" And *doubt* them with superfluous courage:"

i. e. *put* or *do* them *out*. I therefore now think we should read:

Doth all the noble substance often dout, &c.

for surely it is needless to say—

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Enter Ghost.

Hor. Look, my lord, it comes!

Ham. Angels and ministers of grace defend us![2]—
Be thou a spirit of health, or goblin damn'd,[3]
Bring with thee airs from heaven, or blasts from hell,
Be thy intents wicked, or charitable,
Thou com'st in such a questionable shape,[4]
That I will speak to thee; I 'll call thee, Hamlet,
King, father, royal Dane: O, answer me:

——*the* noble *substance of* worth *dout*,
because the idea of *worth* is comprehended in the epithet—*noble*. *Steevens.*

[2] *Angels and ministers of grace defend us!* &c.] Hamlet's speech to the apparition of his father seems to consist of three parts. When first he sees the spectre, he fortifies himself with an invocation:

Angels and ministers of grace defend us!

As the spectre approaches, he deliberates with himself, and determines, that whatever it be he will venture to address it.

Be thou a spirit of health, or goblin damn'd,
Bring with thee airs from heaven, or blasts from hell,
Be thy intents wicked, or charitable,
Thou com'st in such a questionable shape,
That I will speak to thee; I 'll call thee, &c.

This he says while his father is advancing; he then, as he had determined, *speaks to him*, and *calls him—Hamlet, King, Father, Royal Dane: O! answer me. Johnson.*

[3] *Be thou a spirit of health, or goblin damn'd,* &c.] So, in *Acolastus his After-wit*, 1600:

" Art thou a god, a man, or else a ghost?
" Com'st thou from heaven, where bliss and solace dwell?
" Or from the airie cold-engendering coast?
" Or from the darksome dungeon-hold of hell?"

The first known edition of this play is in 1604.

The same question occurs also in the MS. known by the title of *William and the Werwolf*, in the Library of King's College, Cambridge:

" Whether thou be a gode gost in goddis name that speakest,
" Or any foul fiend fourmed in this wise,
" And if we schul of the hent harme or gode." p. 36.

Again, in Barnaby Googe's *Fourth Eglog:*

" What soever thou art yt thus dost com,
" Ghoost, hagge, or fende of hell,
" I the comaunde by him that lyves
" Thy name and case to tell." *Steevens.*

[4] ——questionable *shape*,] By *questionable* is meant provoking question. *Hanmer.*

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Let me not burst in ignorance! but tell,
Why thy canoniz'd bones, hearsed in death,
Have burst their cerements!" why the sepulchre,

So, in *Macbeth*:

" Live you, or are you aught
" That man may question?" *Johnson.*

Questionable, I believe, means only *propitious to conversation; easy and willing to be conversed with.* So, in *As you Like it*: " An *unquestionable* spirit, which you have not." *Unquestionable* in this last instance certainly signifies *unwilling to be talked with.* *Steevens.*

Questionable perhaps only means *capable of being conversed with.* *To question*, certainly in our author's time signified *to converse.* So, in his *Rape of Lucrece*, 1594:

" For after supper long he *questioned*
" With modest Lucrece —."

Again, in *Antony and Cleopatra*:

" Out of our *question* wipe him."

See also *King Lear*, Act V, sc. iii, Vol. XIV. *Malone.*

s ——— *tell,*
Why thy canoniz'd bones, hearsed in death,
Have burst their cerements!] Hamlet, amazed at an apparition, which, though in all ages credited, has in all ages been considered as the most wonderful and most dreadful operation of supernatural agency, enquires of the spectre, in the most emphatick terms, why he breaks the order of nature, by returning from the dead; this he asks in a very confused circumlocution, confounding in his fright the soul and body. Why, says he, have *thy bones*, which with due ceremonies have been entombed *in death*, in the common state of departed mortals, *burst* the folds in which they were embalmed? Why has the tomb, in which we saw thee quietly laid, opened his mouth, that mouth which, by its weight and stability, seemed closed for ever? The whole sentence is this: *Why dost thou appear, whom we know to be dead?* *Johnson.*

By the expression *hearsed in death* is meant, shut up and secured with all those precautions which are usually practised in preparing dead bodies for sepulture, such as the winding-sheet, shrowd, coffin, &c. perhaps embalming into the bargain. So that *death* is here used, by a metonymy of the antecedent for the consequents, for the rites of death, such as are generally esteemed due, and practised with regard to dead bodies. Consequently, I understand by *cerements*, the waxed winding-sheet or winding-sheets, in which the corpse was enclosed and sown up, in order to preserve it the longer from external impressions from the humidity of the sepulchre, as embalming was intended to preserve it from internal corruption. *Heath.*

By *hearsed death*, the poet seems to mean, *reposited and confined in the place of the dead.* In his *Rape of Lucrece* he has again used this uncommon participle in nearly the same sense:

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Wherein we saw thee quietly in-urn'd,[6]
Hath op'd his ponderous and marble jaws,
To cast thee up again! What may this mean,
That thou, dead corse, again, in cómplete steel,[7]
Revisit'st thus the glimpses of the moon,
Making night hideous; and we fools of nature,[8]
So horridly to shake our disposition,[9]
With thoughts beyond the reaches of our souls?
Say, why is this? wherefore? what should we do?

Hor. It beckons you to go away with it,
As if it some impartment did desire
To you alone.

Mar. Look, with what courteous action
It waves you to a more removed ground;[1]

" Thy sea within a puddle's womb is *hearsed*,
" And not the puddle in thy sea dispersed." *Malone.*

[6] —— *quietly* in-urn'd,] The quartos read—*interr'd*. *Steevens.*

[7] *That thou, dead corse, again, in cómplete steel,*] Thus also is the adjective *cómplete* accented by Chapman in his version of the fifth *Iliad*:

" And made his *cómplete* armour cast a far more *cómplete* light."

Again, in the nineteenth *Iliad*:

" Grave silence strook the *cómplete* court."

It is probable, that Shakspeare introduced his Ghost in armour, that it might appear more solemn by such a discrimination from the other characters; though it was really the custom of the Danish kings to be buried in that manner. Vide *Olaus Wormius*, cap. vii:

" Struem regi nec vestibus, nec odoribus cumulant, *sua cuique arma*, quorundam igni et equus adjicitur."

" —— sed postquam magnanimus ille Danorum rex collem sibi magnitudinis conspicuæ extruxisset, (cui post obitum regio diademate exornatum, *armis indutum*, inferendum esset cadaver," &c. *Steevens.*

[8] —— *we fools of nature*,] The expression is fine, as intimating we were only kept (as formerly, fools in a great family,) to make sport for nature, who lay hid only to mock and laugh at us, for our vain searches into her mysteries. *Warburton.*

—— *we fools of nature*,] i. e. making us, who are the sport of nature, whose mysterious operations are beyond the reaches of our souls, &c. So, in *Romeo and Juliet*:

" O, I am *fortune's fool*." *Malone.*

—— *fools of nature*,] This phrase is used by Davenant, in the *Cruel Brother*, 1630, Act V, sc. i. *Reed.*

[9] —— *to shake our* disposition,] *Disposition* for *frame*. *Warburton.*

[1] —— *a more* removed *ground*:] i. e. *remote*. So, in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*:

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But do not go with it.

Hor. No, by no means.

Ham. It will not speak; then I will follow it.

Hor. Do not, my lord.

Ham. Why, what should be the fear?
I do not set my life at a pin's fee;[2]
And, for my soul, what can it do to that,
Being a thing immortal as itself?
It waves me forth again;—I'll follow it.

Hor. What, if it tempt you toward the flood, my lord,
Or to the dreadful summit of the cliff,
That beetles o'er his base[3] into the sea?
And there assume some other horrible form,
Which might deprive your sovereignty of reason,[4]

"From Athens is her house *remov'd* seven leagues." The first folio reads—*remote*. *Steevens.*

[2] —— *pin's fee;*] The value of a pin. *Johnson.*

[3] *That* beetles *o'er his base* —] So, in Sidney's *Arcadia*, B. I: "Hills lifted up their *beetle*-brows, as if they would overlooke the pleasantnesse of their under prospect." *Steevens.*

That beetles *o'er his base* —] That *hangs o'er* his base, like what is called a *beetle-brow*. This verb is, I believe, of our author's coinage. *Malone.*

[4] —— deprive *your* sovereignty *of reason,*] i. e. your ruling power of reason. When poets wish to invest any quality or virtue with uncommon splendor, they do it by some allusion to regal eminence. Thus, among the excellencies of Banquo's character, our author distinguishes "his *royalty* of nature," i. e. his natural *superiority* over others, his independent dignity of mind. I have selected this instance to explain the former, because I am told that "*royalty* of nature" has been idly supposed to bear some allusion to Banquo's distant prospect of the crown.

To *deprive* your sovereignty of reason, therefore, does not signify, *to deprive your princely mind of rational powers, but, to take away from you the command of reason, by which man is governed.*

So, in Chapman's version of the first *Iliad:*

"—— I come from heaven to see
"Thy anger settled: if thy soul will use *her soveraigntie*
"In fit reflection."

Dr. Warburton would read *deprave;* but several proofs are given in a note to *King Lear*, Act I, sc. ii, Vol. XIV, of Shakspeare's use of the word *deprive*, which is the true reading. *Steevens.*

I believe, *deprive* in this place signifies simply to *take away.* *Johnson.*

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And draw you into madness? think of it:
The very place[5] puts toys of desperation,[6]
Without more motive, into every brain,
That looks so many fathoms to the sea,
And hears it roar beneath.

Ham. It waves me still:—
Go on, I 'll follow thee.

Mar. You shall not go, my lord.

Ham. Hold off your hands.

Hor. Be rul'd, you shall not go.

Ham. My fate cries out,
And makes each petty artery in this body
As hardy as the Némean lion's nerve.[7]—[Ghost *beckons.*
Still am I call'd; unhand me, gentlemen;—
[*Breaking from them.*
By heaven, I 'll make a ghost of him that lets me:[8]—
I say, away:—Go on, I 'll follow thee.
[*Exeunt* Ghost *and* HAM.

Hor. He waxes desperate with imagination.

Mar. Let 's follow; 'tis not fit thus to obey him.

Hor. Have after:—To what issue will this come?

[5] *The very place* —] The four following lines added from the first edition. *Pope.*

[6] —— *puts* toys *of desperation,*] *Toys,* for *whims. Warburton.*

[7] *As hardy as the* Némean *lion's nerve.*] Shakspeare has again accented the word *Nemean* in this manner, in *Love's Labour's Lost:*

" Thus dost thou hear the Némean lion roar."

Spenser, however, wrote Neméan, *Fairy Queen,* B. V, c. i:

" Into the great Neméan lion's grove."

Our poet's conforming in this instance to the Latin prosody was certainly accidental, for he, and almost all the poets of his time, disregarded the quantity of Latin names. So, in *Locrine,* 1595, (though undoubtedly the production of a scholar) we have *Amphĭon* instead of *Amphīon,* &c. See also, p. 29, n. 5. *Malone.*

The true quantity of this word was rendered obvious to Shakspeare by Twine's translation of part of the *Æneid,* and Golding's version of Ovid's *Metamorphoses. Steevens.*

[8] —— *that* lets *me:*] To *let* among our old authors signifies to prevent, to hinder. It is still a word current in the law, and to be found in almost all leases. *Steevens.*

So, in *No Wit like a Woman's,* a comedy, by Middleton, 1657:

" That *lets* her not to be your daughter now." *Malone.*

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Mar. Something is rotten in the state of Denmark.
Hor. Heaven will direct it.[9]
Mar. Nay, let 's follow him.
[*Exeunt.*

SCENE V.

A more remote Part of the Platform.

Re-enter Ghost *and* HAMLET.

Ham. Whither wilt thou lead me? speak, I 'll go no further.
Ghost. Mark me.
Ham. I will.
Ghost. My hour is almost come,
When I to sulphurous and tormenting flames
Must render up myself.
Ham. Alas, poor ghost!
Ghost. Pity me not, but lend thy serious hearing
To what I shall unfold.
Ham. Speak, I am bound to hear.
Ghost. So art thou to revenge, when thou shalt hear.
Ham. What?
Ghost. I am thy father's spirit;
Doom'd for a certain term to walk the night;
And, for the day, confin'd to fast in fires,[1] lasting

[9] *Heaven will* direct *it.*] Perhaps it may be more apposite to read, "Heaven will *detect* it." *Farmer.*

Marcellus answers Horatio's question, "To what issue will this come?" and Horatio also answers it himself with a pious resignation, "Heaven will *direct* it." *Blackstone.*

[1] *Doom'd for a certain time to walk the night;*
And, for the day, confin'd to fast *in fires,*] Chaucer has a similar passage with regard to the punishments of hell, *Parson's Tale*, p. 193, Mr. Urry's edition: "And moreover the misese of hell, shall be in defaute of mete and drinke:" *Smith.*

Nash, in his *Pierce Pennilesse his Supplication to the Devil*, 1595, has the same idea: "Whether it be a place of horror, stench and darkness, where men *see meat, but can get none*, and are ever thirsty," &c. Before I had read the *Persones Tale* of Chaucer, I supposed that he meant rather to drop a stroke of satire on sacerdotal luxury, than to give a serious account of the place of future torment. Chaucer, however, is as grave as Shakspeare. So, likewise at the conclusion of an ancient pamphlet called *The Wyll of the Deuyll*, bl. l. no date:

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Till the foul crimes, done in my days of nature,
Are burnt and purg'd away.[2] But that I am forbid
To tell the secrets of my prison-house,
I could a tale unfold, whose lightest word
Would harrow up thy soul; freeze thy young blood;
Make thy two eyes, like stars, start from their spheres;[3]

" Thou shalt lye in frost and *fire*
" With sicknesse and *hunger*;" &c.

Again, in *Love's Labour's Lost:*

" —— love's *fasting* pain."

It is observable, that in the statutes of our religious houses, most of the punishments affect the *diet* of the offenders.

But for the foregoing examples, I should have supposed we ought to read—" confin'd to *waste* in fires." *Steevens.*

This passage requires no amendment. As spirits were supposed to feel the same desires and appetites that they had on earth, to *fast* might be considered as one of the punishments inflicted on the wicked. *M. Mason.*

[2] *Are burnt and purg'd away.*] Gawin Douglas really changes the Platonic hell into the " punytion of saulis in purgatory:" and it is observable, that when the Ghost informs Hamlet of his doom there—

" Till the foul crimes done in his days of nature
" Are *burnt and purg'd away.*"—

The expression is very similar to the Bishop's. I will give you his version as concisely as I can: " It is a nedeful thyng to suffer panis and torment;—Sum in the wyndis, sum under the watter, and in the fire uthir sum: thus the mony vices—

" Contrakkit in the corpis be *done away*
" *And purgit.*" —— Sixte Book of Eneados, fol. p. 191.
Farmer.

Shakspeare might have found this expression in *The Hystorie of Hamlet*, bl. l. F. 2, edit. 1608: " He set fire in the foure corners of the hal, in such sort, that of all that were as then therein not one escaped away, but were forced *to purge their sinnes by fire.*" *Malone.*

Shakspeare talks more like a Papist, than a Platonist; but the language of Bishop Douglas is that of a good Protestant:

" Thus the mony vices
" Contrakkit in the corpis be done away
" And purgit."

These are the very words of our Liturgy, in the commendatory prayer for a sick person at the point of departure, in the office for the visitation of the sick:—" Whatsoever defilements it may have contracted—being purged and done away." *Whalley.*

[3] *Make thy two* eyes, *like stars*, start from their spheres;] So, in our poet's 108th Sonnet:

" How have mine *eyes out of their spheres been fitted*,
" In the distraction of this madding fever!" *Malone.*

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Thy knotted and combined locks to part,
And each particular hair to stand on end,
Like quills upon the fretful porcupine:[4]
But this eternal blazon must not be
To ears of flesh and blood:—List, list, O list!—
If thou didst ever thy dear father love,——
Ham. O heaven!
Ghost. Revenge his foul and most unnatural murder.[5]
Ham. Murder?
Ghost. Murder most foul, as in the best it is;
But this most foul, strange, and unnatural.
Ham. Haste me to know it; that I, with wings as swift
As meditation, or the thoughts of love,[6]

[4] —— fretful *porcupine:*] The quartos read—*fearful,* &c. Either epithet may serve. This animal is at once irascible and timid. The same image occurs in *The Romaunt of the Rose,* where Chaucer is describing the personage of *danger:*

"Like sharpe urchons his *heere* was grow."

An *urchin* is a hedge-hog.

The old copies, however, have—*porpentine,* which is frequently written by our ancient poets instead of *porcupine.* So, in *Skialetheia,* a collection of Epigrams, Satires, &c. 1598:

"*Porpentine*-backed, for here he lies on thornes." *Steevens.*

[5] *Revenge his foul and most unnatural murder.*] As a proof that this play was written before 1597, of which the contrary has been asserted by Mr. Holt in Dr. Johnson's Appendix, I must borrow, as usual, from Dr. Farmer: "Shakspeare is said to have been no extraordinary actor; and that the top of his performance was the Ghost in his own *Hamlet.* Yet this *chef d'œuvre* did not please: I will give you an original stroke at it. Dr. Lodge published in the year 1596, a pamphlet called *Wit's Miserie, or the World's Madness, discovering the incarnate Devils of the Age,* quarto. One of these devils is, *Hate-virtue, or sorrow for another man's good successe,* who, says the doctor, is *a foule lubber,* and looks as pale as the vizard of the *Ghost,* which cried so miserably at the theatre, *Hamlet revenge.*" *Steevens.*

I suspect that this stroke was levelled not at Shakspeare, but at the performer of the Ghost in an older play on this subject, exhibited before 1589. *Malone.*

[6] *As meditation, or the thoughts of love,*] This similitude is extremely beautiful. The word *meditation* is consecrated, by the *mysticks,* to signify that stretch and flight of mind which aspires to the enjoyment of the supreme good. So that Hamlet, considering with what to compare the swiftness of his revenge, chooses two of the most rapid things in nature, the ardency of divine and human passion, in an *enthusiast* and a *lover.* *Warburton.*

The comment on the word *meditation* is so ingenious that I hope it is just. *Johnson.*

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May sweep to my revenge.
Ghost. I find thee apt;
And duller should'st thou be than the fat weed
That rots itself in ease on Lethe wharf,[7]
Would'st thou not stir in this. Now, Hamlet, hear

[7] *And duller should'st thou be than the fat weed*
That rots itself in ease on Lethe wharf,] Shakspeare, apparently through ignorance, makes Roman Catholicks of these Pagan Danes; and here gives a description of purgatory; but yet mixes it with the Pagan fable of Lethe's wharf. Whether he did it to insinuate to the zealous Protestants of his time, that the Pagan and Popish purgatory stood both upon the same footing of credibility, or whether it was by the same kind of licentious inadvertance that Michael Angelo brought Charon's bark into his picture of the Last Judgment, is not easy to decide. *Warburton.*

That rots *itself in ease*, &c.] The quarto reads—That *roots* itself. Mr. Pope follows it. Otway has the same thought:

" —— like a coarse and useless dunghill weed
" Fix'd to one spot, and *rot* just as I grow."

Mr. Cowper also, in his version of the seventh *Iliad*, v. 100, has adopted this phrase of Shakspeare, to express—

" Ἥμενος αὖθι ἴκοτο ἀκήριος,—"
" *Rot* where you sit." v. 112.

In Pope's *Essay on Man*, Ep. II, 64, we meet with a similar comparison:

" Fix'd like a plant on his peculiar spot,
" To draw nutrition, propagate, and *rot*."

The superiority of the reading of the folio is to me apparent: to be in a crescent state (i. e. to *root* itself) affords an idea of activity; to *rot* better suits with the dulness and inaction to which the Ghost refers. Beaumont and Fletcher have a thought somewhat similar in *The Humorous Lieutenant:*

" This *dull* root pluck'd from *Lethe's* flood." *Steevens.*

That roots *itself in ease* &c.] Thus the quarto, 1604. The folio reads—That *rots* itself &c. I have preferred the reading of the original copy, because to *root itself* is a natural and easy phrase, but " to *rot* itself," not English. Indeed in general the readings of the original copies, when not corrupt, ought, in my opinion, not to be departed from, without very strong reason. *That roots itself in ease*, means, whose sluggish root is idly extended.

The modern editors read—*Lethe's* wharf; but the reading of the old copy is right. So, in Sir Aston Cockain's *Poems*, 1658, p. 177:

" —— fearing these great actions might die,
" Neglected cast all into *Lethe lake*." *Malone.*

That Shakspeare, or his first editors, supposed—*rots itself* to be English, is evident from the same phrase being used in *Antony and Cleopatra:*

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'Tis given out, that, sleeping in mine orchard,
A serpent stung me; so the whole ear of Denmark
Is by a forged process of my death
Rankly abus'd: but know, thou noble youth,
The serpent, that did sting thy father's life,
Now wears his crown.

Ham. O, my prophetick soul! my uncle!

Ghost. Ay, that incestuous, that adulterate beast,
With witchcraft of his wit,[8] with traitorous gifts,
(O wicked wit, and gifts, that have the power
So to seduce!) won to his shameful lust
The will of my most seeming-virtuous queen:
O, Hamlet, what a falling-off was there!
From me, whose love was of that dignity,
That it went hand in hand even with the vow
I made to her in marriage; and to decline
Upon a wretch, whose natural gifts were poor
To those of mine!
But virtue, as it never will be mov'd,
Though lewdness court it in a shape of heaven;
So lust, though to a radiant angel link'd,
Will sate itself in a celestial bed,
And prey on garbage.[9]
But, soft! methinks, I scent the morning air;
Brief let me be:—Sleeping within mine orchard,[1]

" ——lackeying the varying tide,
" To *rot itself* with motion."
See *Anthony and Cleopatra*, Act I, sc. iv, Vol. XIII. *Steevens.*

[8] —— *his wit,*] The old copies have *wits*. The subsequent line shows that it was a misprint. *Malone.*

[9] —— *sate itself in a celestial bed,*
And prey on garbage.] The same image occurs again in *Cymbeline:*
" ——————ravening first
" The lamb, *longs after for the garbage.*" *Steevens.*
The same sentiment is expressed in a fragment of Euripides, *Antiope*, v. 86, edit. Barnes:
" Κύπρος δὲ πάντων, καὶ γὰρ ἐν καλλίστοις
" Λέκτροις ἐν αἰσχροῖς εἶδον ἐκπεπλημένους.
" Δαιτὸς δὲ πλησθεὶς τις, ᾽ασμενος πάλιν
" Φαύλη διαίτη προσβαλὼν ᾽ησθη σίτου." *Todd.*

[1] —— *mine* orchard,] *Orchard* for *garden*. So, in *Romeo and Juliet:*
" The *orchard* walls are high, and hard to climb." *Steevens.*

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My custom always of the afternoon,[2]
Upon my sécure hour thy uncle stole,
With juice of cursed hebenon in a vial,[3]
And in the porches of mine ears did pour
The leperous distilment;[4] whose effect
Holds such an enmity with blood of man,
That, swift as quicksilver, it courses through
The natural gates and alleys of the body;
And, with a sudden vigour, it doth posset
And curd, like eager droppings into milk,
The thin and wholesome blood: so did it mine;
And a most instant tetter bark'd about,
Most lazar-like, with vile and loathsome crust,

[2] —— Sleeping ——

My custom always of the afternoon,] See the *Paston Letters*, Vol. III, p. 282: "Written in my *sleeping time*, at *afternoon*" &c. See note on this passage. *Steevens.*

[3] *With juice of cursed* hebenon *in a vial,*] The word here used was more probably designed by a *metathesis*, either of the poet or transcriber, for *henebon*, that is, *henbane*; of which the most common kind (*hyoscyamus niger*) is certainly *narcotick*, and perhaps, if taken in a considerable quantity, might prove poisonous. Galen calls it cold in the third degree; by which in this, as well as *opium*, he seems not to mean an actual coldness, but the power it has of benumbing the faculties. Dioscorides ascribes to it the property of producing madness (ὑοσκυαμος μανιώδης). These qualities have been confirmed by several cases related in modern observations. In Wepfer we have a good account of the various effects of this root upon most of the members of a *convent* in Germany, who eat of it for supper by mistake, mixed with succory;—heat in the throat, giddiness, dimness of sight, and delirium. *Cicut. Aquatic.* c. xviii. *Grey.*

So, in Drayton's *Barons' Wars*, p. 51:

"The pois'ning *henbane*, and the mandrake drad."

Again, in the Philosopher's 4th Satire of Mars, by Robert Anton, 1616:

"The poison'd *henbane*, whose cold juice doth kill."

In Marlowe's *Jew of Malta*, 1633, the word is written in a different manner:

"—— the blood of Hydra, Lerna's bane,
"The juice of *hebon*, and Cocytus' breath." *Steevens.*

[4] *The leperous* distilment;] So, in Painter's *Palace of Pleasure*, Vol. II, p. 142: "— which being once possessed, never leaveth the patient till it hath enfeebled his state, like the qualitie of *poison distilling* through the veins even to the heart." *Malone.*

Surely, the leperous *distilment* signifies the water *distilled* from henbane, that subsequently occasioned leprosy. *Steevens.*

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All my smooth body.
Thus was I, sleeping, by a brother's hand,
Of life, of crown, of queen, at once despatch'd :[5] "despoiled
Cut off even in the blossoms of my sin,[6]
Unhousel'd, disappointed, unanel'd ;[7]

[5] —— *at once* despatch'd :] *Despatch'd* for *bereft. Warburton.*

[6] *Cut off even in the blossoms of my sin,* &c.] The very words of this part of the speech are taken (as I have been informed by a gentleman of undoubted veracity) from an old *Legend of Saints,* where a man, who was accidentally drowned, is introduced as making the same complaint. *Steevens.*

[7] *Unhousel'd, disappointed, unanel'd ;*] *Unhousel'd* is without having received the sacrament.

Disappointed, as Dr. Johnson observes, " is the same as *unappointed,* and may be properly explained *unprepared.* A man well furnished with things necessary for an enterprise, was said to be well *appointed.*"

This explanation of *disappointed* may be countenanced by a quotation of Mr. Upton's from *Measure for Measure :*

" Therefore your best *appointment* make with speed."

Isabella, as Mr. Malone remarks, is the speaker, and her brother, who was condemned to die, is the person addressed.

Unanel'd is without extreme unction.

I shall now subjoin as many notes as are necessary for the support of the first and third of these explanations. I administer the bark only, not supposing any reader will be found who is desirous to swallow the whole tree.

In the *Textus Roffensis* we meet with two of these words— " The monks offering themselves to perform all priestly functions of *houseling,* and *aveyling.*" *Aveyling* is misprinted for *aneyling. Steevens.*

See *Mort d'Arthur,* p. iii, c. 175: " So when he was *houseled* and *aneled,* and had all that a Christian man ought to have," &c. *Tyrwhitt.*

The subsequent extract from a very scarce and curious copy of Fabian's *Chronicle,* printed by Pynson, 1516, seems to remove every possibility of doubt concerning the true signification of the words *unhousel'd* and *unanel'd.* The historian, speaking of Pope Innocent's having laid the whole kingdom of England under an interdict, has these words: " Of the manner of this interdiccion of this lande have I seen dyverse opynyons, as some ther be that saye that the lande was interdyted thorwly and the churchis and housys of relygyon closyd, that no where was used mase, nor dyvyne servyce, by whiche reason none of the VII sacramentis all this terme should be mynystred or occupyed, nor chyld *crystened,* nor man *confessed,* nor *marryed;* but it was not so strayght. For there were dyverse placys in Englond, which were occupyed with dyvyne servyce all that season by lycence pur-

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No reckoning made, but sent to my account
With all my imperfections on my head:
O, horrible! O, horrible! most horrible![8]
If thou hast nature in thee, bear it not;
Let not the royal bed of Denmark be
A couch for luxury[9] and damned incest.
But, howsoever thou pursu'st this act,
Taint not thy mind, nor let thy soul contrive
Against thy mother aught; leave her to heaven,
And to those thorns that in her bosom lodge,
To prick and sting her. Fare thee well at once!
The glow-worm shows the matin to be near,
And 'gins to pale his uneffectual fire:[1]

chased than or before, also chyldren were chrystenyd throughe all the lande and men *houselyd* and *anelyd*." Fol. 14, Septima Pars Johannis.

The Anglo-Saxon noun-substantives *husel*, (the eucharist) and *ele* (oil) are plainly the roots of these last-quoted compound adjectives.—For the meaning of the affix *an* to the last, I quote Spelman's Gloss. in loco: "Quin et dictionibus (an) adjungitur, siquidem vel *majoris notationis* gratia, vel ad *singulare aliquid*, vel *unicum* demonstrandum." Hence *anelyd* should seem to signify *oiled* or *anointed* by way of eminence, i. e. having received extreme unction. For the confirmation of the sense given here, there is the strongest internal evidence in the passage. The historian is speaking of the VII sacraments, and he expressly names five of them, viz. baptism, marriage, auricular confession, the *eucharist*, and *extreme unction*.

The antiquary is desired to consult the edition of Fabian, printed by Pynson, 1516, because there are others, and I remember to have seen one in the Bodleian Library at Oxford, with a continuation to the end of Queen Mary, London, 1559, in which the language is much modernized. *Brand.*

[8] *O, horrible! O, horrible! most horrible!*] It was ingeniously hinted to me by a very learned lady, that this line seems to belong to Hamlet, in whose mouth it is a proper and natural exclamation; and who, according to the practice of the stage, may be supposed to interrupt so long a speech.

[9] *A couch for* luxury —] i. e. for *lewdness*. So, in *K. Lear*:
"To 't *luxury*, pell-mell, for I lack soldiers." *Steevens.*

See Vol. XII, p. 167, n. 4, and p. 198. *Malone.*

[1] —— *pale his uneffectual fire:*] i. e. shining without heat. *Warburton.*

To *pale* is a verb used by Lady Elizabeth Carew, in her *Tragedy of Mariam*, 1613:
"—— Death can *pale* as well
"A cheek of roses, as a cheek less bright."

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Adieu, adieu, adieu! remember me.[2] [*Exit.*

Ham. O all you host of heaven! O earth! What else?
And shall I couple hell?—O fy[3]!—Hold, hold, my heart;
And you, my sinews, grow not instant old,
But bear me stiffly up!—Remember thee?
Ay, thou poor ghost, while memory holds a seat
In this distracted globe.[4] Remember thee?
Yea, from the table of my memory[5]
I'll wipe away all trivial fond records,
All saws of books, all forms, all pressures past,
That youth and observation copied there;
And thy commandment all alone shall live
Within the book and volume of my brain,
Unmix'd with baser matter: yes, by heaven.
O most pernicious woman!

Again, in Urry's Chaucer, p. 368: "The sterre *paleth* her white cheres by the flambes of the sonne," &c.

Uneffectual fire, I believe, rather means, fire that is no longer seen when the light of morning approaches. So, in *Pericles, Prince of Tyre*, 1609:

"———— like a *glow-worm*,—
"The which hath fire in darkness, none in light." *Steevens.*

[2] *Adieu, adieu, adieu!* &c.] The folio reads—
Adieu, adieu, Hamlet: *remember me. Steevens.*

[3] —— *O fy!*] These words (which hurt the measure, and from that circumstance, and their almost ludicrous turn, may be suspected as an interpolation,) are found only in the two earliest quartos.

"*O fy!*" however, might have been the marginal reprehension of some scrupulous reader, to whom the MS. had been communicated before it found its way to the press. *Steevens.*

[4] ———— *Remember thee?*
Ay, thou poor ghost, while memory holds a seat
In this distracted globe.] So, in our poet's 122d Sonnet:
"Which shall above that idle rank remain,
"Beyond all dates, even to eternity;
"Or at the least, *so long as brain and heart*
"*Have faculty by nature to subsist.*" *Malone.*

—— *this distracted globe.*] i. e. in this head confused with thought. *Steevens.*

[5] *Yea, from* the table of my memory —] This expression is used by Sir Philip Sidney in his *Defence of Poesie*. *Malone.*

—— from the table of my memory I'll *wipe away* &c.] This phrase will remind the reader of Chæria's exclamation in the *Eunuch* of Terence:—"O faciem pulchram! *deleo* omnes dehinc ex animo mulieres." *Steevens.*

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O villain, villain, smiling, damned villain!
My tables,—meet it is, I set it down,[6]
That one may smile, and smile, and be a villain;
At least, I am sure, it may be so in Denmark: [*Writing.*
So, uncle, there you are. Now to my word;[7]
It is, *Adieu, adieu! remember me.*
I have sworn 't.

Hor. [*within*] My lord, my lord, ——
Mar. [*within*] Lord Hamlet, ——
Hor. [*within*] Heaven secure him!
Ham. So be it!
Mar. [*within*] Illo, ho, ho, my lord!

[6] *My* tables,—*meet it is, I set it down,*] This is a ridicule on the practice of the time. Hall says, in his character of the *Hypocrite*, "He will ever sit where he may be seene best, and in the midst of the sermon pulles out his *tables* in haste, as if he feared to loose that note," &c. *Farmer.*

No ridicule on the practice of the time could with propriety be introduced on this occasion. Hamlet avails himself of the same caution observed by the Doctor in the fifth act of *Macbeth*: "I will set down whatever comes from her, to satisfy my remembrance the more strongly."

Dr. Farmer's remark, however, as to the frequent use of table-books, may be supported by many instances. So, in the Induction to *The Malcontent*, 1604: "I tell you I am one that hath seen this play often, and can give them intelligence for their action: I have most of the jests of it here in my *table-book*."

Again, in *Love's Sacrifice*, 1633:

"You are one loves courtship:
"You had some change of words; 'twere no lost labour
"To stuff your *table-books*."

Again, in *Antonio's Revenge*, 1602: Balurdo draws out his *writing-tables* and writes—

"*Retort* and *obtuse*, good words, very good words."

Again, in *Every Woman in her Humour*, 1609:

"Let your *tables* befriend your memory; write," &c. *Steevens.*

See also *The Second Part of Henry IV*:

"And therefore will he wipe his *tables* clean,
"And keep no *tell-tale* to his *memory*."

York is here speaking of the king. *Table-books* in the time of our author appear to have been used by all ranks of people. In the church they were filled with short notes of the sermon, and at the theatre with the sparkling sentences of the play. *Malone.*

[7] —— *Now to my word;*] Hamlet alludes to the *watch-word* given every day in military service, which at this time he says is, *Adieu, adieu! remember me.* So, in *The Devil's Charter*, a tragedy, 1607:

"Now to my *watch-word* ——" *Steevens.*

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Ham. Hillo,[8] ho, ho, boy, come, bird, come.[9]

Enter HORATIO *and* MARCELLUS.

Mar. How is't, my noble lord?

Hor. What news, my lord?

Ham. O, wonderful!

Hor. Good my lord, tell it.

Ham. No;
You will reveal it.

Hor. Not I, my lord, by heaven.

Mar. Nor I, my lord.

Ham. How say you then; would heart of man once think it?—
But you 'll be secret,——

Hor. Mar. Ay, by heaven, my lord.

Ham. There 's ne'er a villain, dwelling in all Denmark,
But he 's an arrant knave.

Hor. There needs no ghost, my lord, come from the grave,
To tell us this.

Ham. Why, right; you are in the right;
And so, without more circumstance at all,
I hold it fit, that we shake hands, and part:
You, as your business, and desire, shall point you;—
For every man hath business, and desire,
Such as it is,—and, for my own poor part,
Look you, I will go pray.

Hor. These are but wild and whirling words, my lord.

Ham. I am sorry they offend you, heartily; yes,
'Faith, heartily.

[8] *Hillo,* —] This exclamation is of French origin. So, in the *Venerie de Jacques Fouilloux*, 1635, 4to. p. 12: "*Ty a hillaut,*" &c. *Steevens.*

[9] —— *come, bird, come.*] This is the call which falconers use to their hawk in the air, when they would have him come down to them. *Hanmer.*

This expression is used in Marston's *Dutch Courtezan,* and by many others among the old dramatick writers.

It appears from all these passages, that it was the falconer's call, as Sir T. Hanmer has observed.

Again, in *Tyro's Roaring Megge, planted against the Walls of Melancholy*, &c. 4to. 1598:

"Yet, ere I iournie, Ile go see the kyte:
"*Come, come bird, come:* pox on you, can you mute?" *Steevens.*

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Hor. There 's no offence, my lord.
Ham. Yes, by Saint Patrick,[1] but there is, Horatio,
And much offence too. Touching this vision here,—
It is an honest ghost, that let me tell you:
For your desire to know what is between us,
O'er-master it as you may. And now, good friends,
As you are friends, scholars, and soldiers,
Give me one poor request.
Hor. What is 't, my lord? We will.
Ham. Never make known what you have seen to-night.
Hor. Mar. My lord, we will not.
Ham. Nay, but swear 't.
Hor. In faith,
My lord, not I.
Mar. Nor I, my lord, in faith.
Ham. Upon my sword.
Mar. We have sworn, my lord, already.
Ham. Indeed, upon my sword, indeed.
Ghost. [*beneath*] Swear.
Ham. Ha, ha, boy! say'st thou so? art thou there, true-penny?[2]
Come on,—you hear this fellow in the cellarage,—
Consent to swear.
Hor. Propose the oath, my lord.
Ham. Never to speak of this that you have seen,
Swear by my sword.[3]

[1] —— *by Saint Patrick,*] How the poet comes to make Hamlet swear by *St. Patrick*, I know not. However, at this time all the whole northern world had their learning from Ireland; to which place it had retired, and there flourished under the auspices of this saint. But it was, I suppose, only said at random; for he makes Hamlet a student of Wittenberg. *Warburton.*

Dean Swift's "Verses on the sudden drying-up of St. Patrick's Well, 1726," contain many learned allusions to the early cultivation of literature in Ireland. *Nichols.*

[2] —— *true-penny?*] This word, as well as some of Hamlet's former exclamations, we find in *The Malcontent*, 1604:
"Illo, ho, ho, ho; art thou there old *True-penny?*" *Steevens.*

[3] —— *Swear by my sword.*] Here the poet has preserved the manners of the ancient Danes, with whom it was religion to swear upon their swords. See *Bartholinus, De causis contempt. mort. apud Dan. Warburton.*

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Ghost. [*beneath*] Swear.

I was once inclinable to this opinion, which is likewise well defended by Mr. Upton; but Mr. Garrick produced me a passage, I think, in *Brantome*, from which it appeared that it was common to swear upon the sword, that is, upon the cross which the old swords always had upon the hilt. *Johnson.*

Shakspeare, it is more than probable, knew nothing of the ancient Danes, or their manners. Every extract from Dr. Farmer's pamphlet must prove as instructive to the reader as the following:

" In the *Passus Primus* of *Pierce Plowman*,

' David in his daies dubbed knightes,

' And did them *swere on her sword* to serve truth ever.'

" And in *Hieronymo*, the common butt of our author, and the wits of the time, says Lorenzo to Pedringano:

' Swear on this *cross*, that what thou say'st is true:

' But if I prove thee perjur'd and unjust,

' This very *sword*, whereon thou took'st thine oath,

' Shall be a worker of thy tragedy."

To the authorities produced by Dr. Farmer, the following may be added from *Holinshed*, p. 664: " Warwick kissed the *cross* of King Edward's sword, as it were a vow to his promise."

Again, p. 1038, it is said—" that Warwick drew out his sword, which other of the honourable and worshipful that were then present likewise did, whom he commanded, that each one should kiss other's sword, according to an ancient custom amongst men of war in time of great danger; and herewith they made a solemn vow," &c.

Again, in Decker's comedy of *Old Fortunatus*, 1600:

" He has sworn to me on the *cross* of his pure Toledo."

Again, in his *Satiromastix:* " By the *cross* of this sword and dagger, captain, you shall take it."

In the soliloquy of *Roland* addressed to his sword, the *cross* on it is not forgotten: " —— capulo eburneo candidissime, *cruce* aurea splendidissime," &c. *Turpini Hist. de Gestis Caroli Mag. cap.* 22.

Again, in an ancient MS. of which some account is given in a note on the first scene of the first Act of *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, the oath taken by a *master of defence* when his degree was conferred on him, is preserved, and runs as follows: " First you shall sweare (so help you God and halidome, and by all the christendome which God gave you at the fount-stone, and by the *crosse of this sword which doth represent unto you the crosse which our Saviour sufered his most payneful deathe upon,*) that you shall upholde, maynteyne, and kepe to your power all soch articles as shal be heare declared unto you, and receve in the presence of me your maister, and these the rest of the maisters my brethren heare with me at this tyme." *Steevens.*

Spenser observes that the Irish in his time used commonly to swear by their sword. See his *View of the State of Ireland*, written in 1596. This custom, indeed, is of the highest antiquity;

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Ham. *Hic & ubique?* then we 'll shift our ground:—
Come hither, gentlemen,
And lay your hands again upon my sword;
Swear by my sword,
Never to speak of this that you have heard.
Ghost. [*beneath*] Swear by his sword.
Ham. Well said, old mole! can'st work i'the earth so fast?
A worthy pioneer!—Once more remove, good friends.
Hor. O day and night, but this is wondrous strange!
Ham. And therefore as a stranger give it welcome.[4]
There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio,
Than are dreamt of in your philosophy.
But come;——
Here, as before, never, so help you mercy!
How strange or odd soe'er I bear myself,
As I, perchance, hereafter shall think meet
To put an antick disposition on,—
That you, at such times seeing me, never shall,
With arms encumber'd thus, or this head-shake,
Or by pronouncing of some doubtful phrase,
As, *Well, well, we know;*—or, *We could, an if we would;*—or, *If we list to speak;*—or, *There be, an if they might;*[5]—
Or such ambiguous giving out, to note
That you know aught of me:[6]—This do you swear,[7]

having prevailed, as we learn from Lucian, among the Scythians. *Malone.*

[4] *And therefore as a stranger give it welcome.*] i. e. receive it to yourself; take it under your own roof; as much as to say, *Keep it secret.* Alluding to the laws of hospitality. *Warburton.*

Warburton refines too much on this passage. Hamlet means merely to request that they would seem not to know it—to be unacquainted with it. *M. Mason.*

[5] ——*an if* they *might;*] Thus the quarto. The folio reads—an if *there* might. *Malone.*

[6] *Or such ambiguous giving out,* to note,
That you know aught of me:] The construction is irregular and elliptical. Swear as before, says Hamlet, that you never *shall* by folded arms or shaking of your head *intimate that a secret is lodged in your breasts;* and by no ambiguous phrases denote that you know aught of me.

Shakspeare has in many other places begun to construct a sentence in one form, and ended it in another. So, in *All's Well that Ends Well:* "I would the cutting of my garments would serve

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So grace and mercy at your most need help you!
Ghost. [*beneath*] Swear.
Ham. Rest, rest, perturbed spirit![8] —So, gentlemen,

the turn, or the baring of my beard; and *to say* it was in stratagem."

Again, in the same play: "No more of this, Helena;—lest it be rather thought you affect a sorrow, than *to have*:" where he ought to have written *than that you have:* or, *lest you rather be thought to affect a sorrow, than* to have.

Again, *ibidem:*

"I *bade her*—if her fortunes ever stood
"Necessitied to help, *that* by this token
"I would relieve her."

Again, in *The Tempest:*

"I have with such provision in mine art
"So safely order'd, that there is *no soul*—
"No, not so much perdition as an hair
"Betid to any creature in the vessel."

See Vol. II, p. 15, n. 4; and Vol. VI, p. 207, n. 9; and p. 306, n. 5.

Having used the word *never* in the preceding part of the sentence, [that you *never* shall—] the poet considered the *negative* implied in what follows; and hence he wrote—"*or*—to note," instead of *nor*. *Malone.*

[7] —— *This do you swear*, &c.] The folio reads,—*this not to do*, swear, &c. *Steevens.*

Swear is used here, as in many other places, as a dissyllable. *Malone.*

Here again my untutored ears revolt from a new dissyllable; nor have I scrupled, like my predecessors, to supply the pronoun —*you*, which must accidentally have dropped out of a line that is imperfect without it. *Steevens.*

[8] *Rest, rest, perturbed spirit!*] The skill displayed in Shakspeare's management of his Ghost, is too considerable to be overlooked. He has rivetted our attention to it by a succession of forcible circumstances:—by the previous report of the terrified centinels,—by the solemnity of the hour at which the phantom walks,—by its martial stride and discriminating armour, visible only *per incertam lunam*, by the glimpses of the moon,—by its long taciturnity,—by its preparation to speak, when interrupted by the morning cock,—by its mysterious reserve throughout its first scene with Hamlet,—by his resolute departure with it, and the subsequent anxiety of his attendants,—by its conducting him to a solitary angle of the platform,—by its voice from beneath the earth,—and by its unexpected burst on us in the closet.

Hamlet's late interview with the spectre, must in particular be regarded as a stroke of dramatick artifice. The phantom might have told his story in the presence of the officers and Horatio, and yet have rendered itself as inaudible to them, as

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With all my love I do commend me to you:
And what so poor a man as Hamlet is
May do, to express his love and friending to you,
God willing, shall not lack. Let us go in together;
And still your fingers on your lips, I pray.
The time is out of joint;—O cursed spite!
That ever I was born to set it right!
Nay, come, let 's go together. [*Exeunt.*

ACT II.....SCENE I.

A Room in Polonius's *House.*

Enter POLONIUS *and* REYNALDO.[9]

Pol. Give him this money, and these notes, Reynaldo.
Rey. I will, my lord.
Pol. You shall do marvellous wisely, good Reynaldo,
Before you visit him, to make inquiry
Of his behaviour.
Rey. My lord, I did intend it.

afterwards to the Queen. But suspense was our poet's object; and never was it more effectually created, than in the present instance. Six times has the royal semblance appeared, but till now has been withheld from speaking. For this event we have waited with impatient curiosity, unaccompanied by lassitude, or remitted attention.

The Ghost in this tragedy, is allowed to be the genuine product of Shakspeare's strong imagination. When he afterwards avails himself of traditional phantoms, as in *Julius Cæsar*, and *King Richard III*, they are but inefficacious pageants; nay, the apparition of Banquo is a mute exhibitor. Perhaps our poet despaired to equal the vigour of his early conceptions on the subject of preter-natural beings, and therefore allotted them no further eminence in his dramas; or was unwilling to diminish the power of his principal shade, by an injudicious repetition of congenial images. *Steevens.*

The verb *perturb* is used by Holinshed, and by Bacon in his *Essay on Superstition:* "— therefore atheism did never *perturb* states." *Malone.*

[9] *Enter* Polonius *and* Reynaldo.] The quartos read—*Enter old* Polonius *with his man or two. Steevens.*

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Pol. Marry, well said: very well said.[1] Look you, sir,
Inquire me first what Danskers[2] are in Paris;
And how, and who, what means, and where they keep,
What company, at what expence; and finding,
By this encompassment and drift of question,
That they do know my son, come you more nearer
Than your particular demands will touch it:[3]
Take you, as 'twere, some distant knowledge of him;
As thus,—*I know his father, and his friends,*
And, in part, him;—Do you mark this, Reynaldo?

Rey. Ay, very well, my lord.

Pol. *And, in part, him;—but,* you may say,—*not well:*
But, if 't be he I mean, he 's very wild;
Addicted so and so;—and there put on him
What forgeries you please; marry, none so rank
As may dishonour him; take heed of that;
But, sir, such wanton, wild, and usual slips,
As are companions noted and most known
To youth and liberty.

Rey. As gaming, my lord.

Pol. Ay, or drinking, fencing, swearing,[4] quarrelling,

[1] —— *well said: very well said.*] Thus also, the weak and tedious Shallow says to Bardolph, in *The Second Part of King Henry IV*, Act III, sc. ii: "It is well said, sir; and it is well said indeed too." *Steevens.*

[2] —— *Danskers* —] *Danske* (in Warner's *Albion's England*) is the ancient name of Denmark. *Steevens.*

[3] —— *come you more nearer*
Than your particular demands will touch it:] The late editions read, and point, thus:

—— *come you more nearer;*
Then *your particular demands will touch it:*

Throughout the old copies the word which we now write—*than*, is constantly written—*then*. I have therefore printed—*than*, which the context seems to me to require, though the old copies have *then*. There is no point after the word *nearer*, either in the original quarto, 1604, or the folio. *Malone.*

[4] —— *drinking*, fencing, *swearing*,] I suppose, by *fencing* is meant a too diligent frequentation of the fencing-school, a resort of violent and lawless young men. *Johnson.*

Fencing, I suppose, means, piquing himself on his skill in the use of the sword, and quarrelling and brawling, in consequence of that skill. "The cunning of *fencers*, says Gosson, in his *Schoole of Abuse*, 1579, is now applied to *quarrelling*: they thinke themselves no men, if for stirring of a straw, they prove not their valure uppon some bodies fleshe." *Malone.*

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Drabbing:—You may go so far.
Rey. My lord, that would dishonour him.
Pol. 'Faith, no; as you may season it in the charge.
You must not put another scandal on him,[6]
That he is open to incontinency;
That 's not my meaning:[7] but breathe his faults so quaintly,
That they may seem the taints of liberty:
The flash and out-break of a fiery mind;
A savageness[8] in unreclaimed blood,
Of general assault.[9]
Rey. But, my good lord, ——
Pol. Wherefore should you do this?
Rey. Ay, my lord,
I would know that.
Pol. Marry, sir, here 's my drift;
And, I believe, it is a fetch of warrant:[1]
You laying these slight sullies on my son,
As 'twere a thing a little soil'd i' the working,
Mark you,
Your party in converse, him you would sound,
Having ever seen, in the prenominate crimes,[2]
The youth you breathe of, guilty, be assur'd,
He closes with you in this consequence;
Good sir, or so;[3] or *friend*, or *gentleman*,—

[6] *'Faith*, no; *as you may season it* &c.] The quarto reads—*Faith, as you may season it in the charge.* *Malone.*

[6] —— another *scandal on him*,] Thus the old editions. Mr. Theobald reads—*an utter.* *Johnson.*

—— another *scandal* —] i. e. a very different and more scandalous failing, namely habitual incontinency. Mr. Theobald in his *Shakspeare Restored* proposed to read—an *utter* scandal on him; but did not admit the emendation into his edition. *Malone.*

[7] *That 's not my meaning:*] That is not what I mean, when I permit you to accuse him of drabbing. *M. Mason.*

[8] *A* savageness —] *Stwageness*, for *wildness.* *Warburton.*

[9] *Of general assault.*] i. e. such as youth in general is liable to. *Warburton.*

[1] *And, I believe, it is a fetch of* warrant:] So the folio. The quarto reads—a fetch of *wit.* *Steevens.*

[2] —— prenominate *crimes*,] i. e. crimes already named. *Steevens.*

[3] *Good sir, or* so;] I suspect, (with Mr. Tyrwhitt) that the

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According to the phrase, or the addition,
Of man, and country.

Rey. Very good, my lord.

Pol. And then, sir, does he this,—He does—
What was I about to say?—By the mass, I was about to say something:—Where did I leave?

Rey. At, closes in the consequence.

Pol. At, closes in the consequence,[4]—*Ay, marry;*
He closes with you thus:—*I know the gentleman;*
I saw him yesterday, or t' other day,
Or then, or then; with such, or such; and, as you say,
There was he gaming; there o'ertook in his rouse;
There falling out at tennis: or, perchance,
I saw him enter such a house of sale,
(*Videlicet*, a brothel,) *or so forth.*—
See you now;
Your bait of falsehood takes this carp of truth:
And thus do we of wisdom and of reach,
With windlaces, and with assays of bias,
By indirections find directions out;
So, by my former lecture and advice,
Shall you my son: You have me, have you not?

Rey. My lord, I have.

Pol. God be wi' you; fare you well.

Rey. Good my lord,——

Pol. Observe his inclination in yourself.[5]

Rey. I shall, my lord.

Pol. And let him ply his musick.

Rey. Well, my lord.

[*Exit.*

Poet wrote—Good sir, or *sir*, or friend, &c. In the last Act of this play, *so* is used for *so forth*: "—six French rapiers and poniards, with their assigns, as girdle, hanger, and *so*." *Malone*

[4] *At, closes in the consequence,*] Thus the quarto. The folio adds —At friend, or so, or gentleman. *Malone.*

[5] —— in *yourself.*] Sir T. Hanmer reads—*e'en* yourself, and is followed by Dr. Warburton; but perhaps *in* yourself, means, *in your own person*, not by spies. *Johnson.*

The meaning seems to be—The temptations you feel, suspect in him, and be watchful of them. So, in a subsequent scene:

"For by the image of my cause, I see
"The portraiture of his."

Again, in *Timon:*

"I weigh my friend's affection with my own." *C.*

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Enter OPHELIA.

Pol. Farewel!—How now, Ophelia? what 's the matter?

Oph. O, my lord, my lord, I have been so affrighted!

Pol. With what, in the name of heaven?

Oph. My lord, as I was sewing in my closet,
Lord Hamlet,—with his doublet all unbrac'd;
No hat upon his head; his stockings foul'd,
Ungarter'd, and down-gyved to his ancle;[6]
Pale as his shirt; his knees knocking each other;
And with a look so piteous in purport,
As if he had been loosed out of hell,
To speak of horrors,—he comes before me.

Pol. Mad for thy love?

Oph. My lord, I do not know;
But, truly, I do fear it.

Pol. What said he?

Oph. He took me by the wrist, and held me hard;
Then goes he to the length of all his arm;
And, with his other hand thus o'er his brow,
He falls to such perusal of my face,
As he would draw it. Long stay'd he so;
At last,—a little shaking of mine arm,
And thrice his head thus waving up and down,—
He raised a sigh so piteous and profound,
As it did seem to shatter all his bulk,[7]
And end his being: That done, he lets me go:
And, with his head over his shoulder turn'd,
He seem'd to find his way without his eyes;
For out o' doors he went without their helps,
And, to the last, bended their light on me.

Pol. Come, go with me; I will go seek the king.
This is the very ecstacy of love;

[6] *Ungarter'd, and down*-gyved *to his ancle;*] *Down-gyved* means, hanging down like the loose cincture which confines the fetters round the ancles. *Steevens.*

Thus the quartos, 1604, and 1605, and the folio. In the quarto of 1611, the word *gyved* was changed to *gyred*. *Malone.*

[7] —— *all his* bulk,] i. e. all his body. So, in *The Rape of Lucrece:*

" ——————— her heart
" Beating her *bulk*, that his hand shakes with all."

See Vol. XI, p. 48, n. 6. *Malone.*

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Whose violent property foredoes itself,[8]
And leads the will to desperate undertakings,
As oft as any passion under heaven,
That does afflict our natures. I am sorry,—
What, have you given him any hard words of late?

Oph. No, my good lord; but, as you did command,
I did repel his letters, and deny'd
His access to me.

Pol. That hath made him mad.
I am sorry, that with better heed, and judgment,
I had not quoted him:[9] I fear'd, he did but trifle,
And meant to wreck thee; but, beshrew my jealousy!
It seems, it is as proper to our age
To cast beyond ourselves in our opinions,
As it is common for the younger sort
To lack discretion.[1] Come, go we to the king:

[8] —— foredoes *itself,*] To *foredo* is to destroy. So, in *Othello:*
" That either makes me, or *foredoes* me quite." *Steevens.*

[9] *I had not* quoted *him:*] To *quote* is, I believe, to *reckon,* to take an account of, to take the *quotient* or result of a computation. *Johnson.*

I find a passage in *The Isle of Gulls,* a comedy, by John Day, 1606, which proves Dr. Johnson's sense of the word to be not far from the true one:

" ——'twill be a scene of mirth
" For me to *quote* his passions, and his smiles."

To *quote* on this occasion undoubtedly means to *observe.* Again, in Drayton's *Mooncalf:*

" This honest man the prophecy that noted,
" And things therein most curiously had *quoted,*
" Found all these signs," &c.

Again, in *The Woman Hater,* by Beaumont and Fletcher, the intelligencer says,—" I 'll *quote* him to a tittle," i. e. I will mark or observe him.

To *quote,* as Mr. M. Mason observes, is invariably used by Shakspeare in this sense. *Steevens.*

[1] —— *it is as proper to our age*
To cast *beyond ourselves in our opinions,*
As it is common for the younger sort
To lack discretion.] This is not the remark of a weak man. The vice of age is too much suspicion. Men long accustomed to the wiles of life *cast* commonly *beyond themselves,* let their cunning go farther than reason can attend it. This is always the fault of a little mind, made artful by long commerce with the world. *Johnson.*

The quartos read—*By heaven* it is as proper &c. *Steevens.*

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This must be known; which, being kept close, might move
More grief to hide, than hate to utter love.[2]
Come. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

A Room in the Castle.

Enter King, Queen, ROSENCRANTZ, GUILDENSTERN, *and Attendants.*

King. Welome, dear Rosencrantz, and Guildenstern!
Moreover that we much did long to see you,
The need, we have to use you, did provoke
Our hasty sending. Something have you heard
Of Hamlet's transformation; so I call it,
Since nor the exterior nor the inward man
Resembles that it was: What it should be,
More than his father's death, that thus hath put him
So much from the understanding of himself,
I cannot dream of: I entreat you both,
That,—being of so young days brought up with him:
And, since, so neighbour'd to his youth and humour,[3]—
That you vouchsafe your rest here in our court
Some little time: so by your companies
To draw him on to pleasures; and to gather,
So much as from occasion you may glean,
Whether aught,[4] to us unknown, afflicts him thus,

In Decker's *Wonderful Yeare*, 4to. 1603, we find an expression similar to that in the text: "Now the thirstie citizen *casts beyond* the moone." *Malone.*

The same phrase occurs also in *Titus Andronicus*. *Reed.*

[2] *This must be known; which, being kept close, might move*
More grief to hide, than hate to utter love.] i. e. this must be made known to the King, for (being kept secret) the hiding Hamlet's love might occasion more mischief to us from him and the Queen, than the uttering or revealing of it will occasion hate and resentment from Hamlet. The poet's ill and obscure expression seems to have been caused by his affectation of concluding the scene with a couplet.

Sir T. Hanmer reads:

More grief to hide hate, than *to utter love*. *Johnson.*

[3] —— *and* humour,] Thus the folio. The quartos read—*haviour*. *Steevens.*

[4] *Whether aught*, &c.] This line is omitted in the folio. *Steevens.*

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That, open'd, lies within our remedy.

Queen. Good gentlemen, he hath much talk'd of you;
And, sure I am, two men there are not living,
To whom he more adheres. If it will please you
To show us so much gentry,[5] and good will,
As to expend your time with us a while,
For the supply and profit of our hope,[6]
Your visitation shall receive such thanks
As fits a king's remembrance.

Ros. Both your majesties
Might, by the sovereign power you have of us,[7]
Put your dread pleasures more into command
Than to entreaty.

Guil. But we both obey;
And here give up ourselves, in the full bent,[8]
To lay our service freely at your feet,
To be commanded.

King. Thanks, Rosencrantz, and gentle Guildenstern.

Queen. Thanks, Guildenstern, and gentle Rosencrantz:
And I beseech you instantly to visit
My too much changed son.—Go, some of you,
And bring these gentlemen where Hamlet is.

Guil. Heavens make our presence, and our practices,
Pleasant and helpful to him!

Queen. Ay, amen!

[*Exeunt* Ros. Guil. *and some Attendants.*

Enter Polonius.

Pol. The embassadors from Norway, my good lord,
Are joyfully return'd.

King. Thou still hast been the father of good news.

[5] *To show us so much* gentry,] *Gentry*, for *complaisance*. *Warburton.*

[6] *For the supply* &c.] That the hope which your arrival has raised may be completed by the desired effect. *Johnson.*

[7] —— *You have* of *us*,] I believe we should read—*o'er* us, instead of—*of* us. *M. Mason.*

[8] —— *in the full* bent,] *Bent*, for *endeavour*, *application*. *Warburton.*

The full bent, is *the utmost extremity of exertion*. The allusion is to a bow bent as far as it will go. So afterwards, in this play:

"They fool me to *top* of my *bent*." *Malone.*

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Pol. Have I, my lord? Assure you, my good liege,
I hold my duty, as I hold my soul,
Both to my God, and to my gracious king:
And I do think, (or else this brain of mine
Hunts not the trail of policy[9] so sure
As it hath us'd to do,) that I have found
The very cause of Hamlet's lunacy.

King. O, speak of that; that do I long to hear.

Pol. Give first admittance to the embassadors;
My news shall be the fruit[1] to that great feast.

King. Thyself do grace to them, and bring them in.
[*Exit* POL.
He tells me, my dear Gertrude, he hath found
The head and source of all your son's distemper.

Queen. I doubt, it is no other but the main;
His father's death, and our o'erhasty marriage.

Re-enter POLONIUS, *with* VOLTIMAND *and* CORNELIUS.

King. Well, we shall sift him.—Welcome, my good friends!
Say, Voltimand, what from our brother Norway?

Volt. Most fair return of greetings, and desires.
Upon our first, he sent out to suppress
His nephew's levies; which to him appear'd
To be a preparation 'gainst the Polack;
But, better look'd into, he truly found
It was against your highness: Whereat griev'd,—
That so his sickness, age, and impotence,
Was falsely borne in hand,[2]—sends out arrests
On Fortinbras; which he, in brief, obeys;
Receives rebuke from Norway; and, in fine,
Makes vow before his uncle, never more
To give the assay[3] of arms against your majesty.

[9] —— *the* trail *of policy* —] The *trail* is the *course of an animal pursued by the scent.* *Johnson.*

[1] —— *the fruit* —] The *desert* after the meat. *Johnson.*

[2] —— *borne in hand,*] i. e. deceived, imposed on. So, in *Macbeth*, Act III:

" How you were *borne in hand*, how cross'd, &c."

See note on this passage, Vol. VII, p. 127, n. 5. *Steevens.*

[3] *To give the assay* —] To *take the assay* was a technical expression, originally applied to those who tasted wine for princes and great men. See *King Lear*, Act V, sc. iii, Vol. XIV. *Malone.*

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Whereon old Norway, overcome with joy,
Gives him three thousand crowns in annual fee;[4]
And his commission, to employ those soldiers,
So levied as before, against the Polack:
With an entreaty, herein further shown,
[*Gives a Paper.*
That it might please you to give quiet pass
Through your dominions for this enterprize;
On such regards of safety, and allowance,
As therein are set down.
King. It likes us well;
And, at our more consider'd time, we 'll read,
Answer, and think upon this business.
Mean time, we thank you for your well-took labour:
Go to your rest; at night we 'll feast[5] together:
Most welcome home! [*Exeunt* VOL. *and* COR.
Pol. This business is well ended.
My liege, and madam, to expostulate[6]

[4] *Gives him* three *thousand crowns in annual fee;*] This reading first obtained in the edition put out by the players. But all the old quartos (from 1605, downwards,) read *threescore. Theobald.*

The metre is destroyed by the alteration; and threescore thousand crowns, in the days of Hamlet, was an enormous sum of money. *M. Mason.*

—— *annual* fee;] *Fee* in this place signifies *reward, recompence.* So, in *All's Well that Ends Well:*

" —— Not helping, death's my *fee;*
" But if I help, what do you promise me?"

The word is commonly used in Scotland, for *wages,* as we say, *lawyer's fee, physician's fee. Steevens.*

Fee is defined by Minsheu, in his Dict. 1617, a reward. *Malone.*

I have restored the reading of the folio. Mr. Ritson explains it, I think, rightly, thus: the King gave his a nephew a *feud* or *fee* (in land) of that yearly value. *Reed.*

[5] —— *At night we 'll feast* —] The King's intemperance is never suffered to be forgotten. *Johnson.*

[6] *My liege, and madam, to* expostulate —] To *expostulate,* for *to enquire* or *discuss.*

The strokes of humour in this speech are admirable. Polonius's character is that of a weak, pedant, minister of state. His declamation is a fine satire on the impertinent oratory then in vogue, which placed reason in the formality of method, and wit in the gingle and play of words. With what art is he made to pride himself in his *wit:*

" *That he is mad, 'tis true: 'tis true: 'tis pity:*

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What majesty should be, what duty is,

" *And pity 'tis, 'tis true:* A foolish figure;
" But farewel it,"——

And how exquisitely does the poet ridicule the *reasoning in fashion*, where he makes Polonius remark on Hamlet's madness:

" Though this be *madness*, yet there's *method* in 't:"

As if method, which the wits of that age thought the most essential quality of a good discourse, would make amends for the madness. It was *madness* indeed, yet Polonius could comfort himself with this reflection, that at least it was *method*. It is certain Shakspeare excels in nothing more than in the preservation of his characters; *To this life and variety of character* (says our great poet [Pope] in his admirable preface to Shakspeare) *we must add the wonderful preservation.* We have said what is the character of Polonius; and it is allowed on all hands to be drawn with wonderful life and spirit, yet the *unity* of it has been thought by some to be grossly violated in the excellent *precepts* and *instructions* which Shakspeare makes his statesman give his son and servant in the middle of the *first*, and beginning of the *second act*. But I will venture to say, these criticks have not entered into the poet's art and address in this particular. He had a mind to ornament his scenes with those fine lessons of social life; but his Polonius was too weak to be author of them, though he was pedant enough to have met with them in his reading, and fop enough to get them by heart, and retail them for his own. And this the poet has finely shewn us was the case, where, in the middle of Polonius's instructions to his servant, he makes him, though without having received any interruption, forget his lesson, and say—

" And then, sir, does he this;
" He does—What was I about to say?
" I was about to say something——where did I leave?"

The Servant replies:

At, closes in the consequence. This sets Polonius right, and he goes on—

" *At* closes in the consequence.
" —— *Ay marry*,
" *He closes thus:*—I know the gentleman," &c.

which shews the very words got by heart which he was repeating. Otherwise *closes in the consequence*, which conveys no particular idea of the subject he was upon, could never have made him recollect where he broke off. This is an extraordinary instance of the poet's art, and attention to the preservation of character. *Warburton.*

This account of the character of Polonius, though it sufficiently reconciles the seeming inconsistency of so much wisdom with so much folly, does not perhaps correspond exactly to the ideas of our author. The commentator makes the character of Polonius, a character only of manners, discriminated by properties superficial, accidental, and acquired. The poet intended a nobler

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Why day is day, night, night, and time is time,
Were nothing but to waste night, day, and time.
Therefore,—since brevity is the soul of wit,
And tediousness the limbs and outward flourishes,—
I will be brief: Your noble son is mad:
Mad call I it: for, to define true madness,
What is 't, but to be nothing else but mad:
But let that go.

Queen. More matter, with less art.

Pol. Madam, I swear, I use no art at all.
That he is mad, 'tis true: 'tis true, 'tis pity;
And pity 'tis, 'tis true: a foolish figure;
But farewel it, for I will use no art.
Mad let us grant him then: and now remains,
That we find out the cause of this effect;
Or, rather say, the cause of this defect;
For this effect, defective, comes by cause:
Thus it remains, and the remainder thus.
Perpend.
I have a daughter; have, while she is mine;

delineation of a mixed character of manners and of nature. Polonius is a man bred in courts, exercised in business, stored with observation, confident in his knowledge, proud of his eloquence, and declining into dotage. His mode of oratory is truly represented as designed to ridicule the practice of those times, of prefaces that made no introduction, and of method that embarrassed rather than explained. This part of his character is accidental, the rest is natural. Such a man is positive and confident, because he knows that his mind was once strong, and knows not that it is become weak. Such a man excels in general principles, but fails in the particular application. He is knowing in retrospect, and ignorant in foresight. While he depends upon his memory, and can draw from his repositories of knowledge, he utters weighty sentences, and gives useful counsel; but as the mind in its enfeebled state cannot be kept long busy and intent, the old man is subject to sudden dereliction of his faculties, he loses the order of his ideas, and entangles himself in his own thoughts, till he recovers the leading principle, and falls again into his former train. This idea of dotage encroaching upon wisdom, will solve all the phænomena of the character of Polonius. *Johnson.*

Nothing can be more just, judicious, and masterly, than Johnson's delineation of the character of Polonius; and I cannot read it without heartily regretting that he did not exert his great abilities and discriminating powers, in delineating the strange, inconsistent, and indecisive character of Hamlet, to which I confess myself unequal. *M. Mason.*

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Who, in her duty and obedience, mark,
Hath given me this: Now gather, and surmise.
—*To the celestial, and my soul's idol, the most beautified Ophelia,*[7]——
That 's an ill phrase, a vile phrase; *beautified* is a vile phrase; but you shall hear.—Thus:
In her excellent white bosom, these,[8] &c.—
Queen. Came this from Hamlet to her?
Pol. Good madam, stay awhile; I will be faithful.—
Doubt thou, the stars are fire; [Reads.
Doubt, that the sun doth move:
Doubt truth to be a liar;
But never doubt, I love.

[7] — *To the celestial, and my soul's idol, the most* beautified *Ophelia,*] Mr. Theobald for *beautified* substituted *beatified.* *Malone.*

Dr. Warburton has followed Mr. Theobald; but I am in doubt whether *beautified,* though, as Polonius calls it, a *vile phrase,* be not the proper word. *Beautified* seems to be a *vile phrase,* for the ambiguity of its meaning. *Johnson.*

Heywood, in his *History of Edward VI,* says, "*Katherine Parre,* queen dowager to king Henry VIII, was a woman *beautified* with many excellent virtues." *Farmer.*

So, in *The Hog hath lost his Pearl,* 1614:

"A maid of rich endowments, *beautified*
"With all the virtues nature could bestow."

Again, Nash dedicates his *Christ's Tears over Jerusalem,* 1594: "to the most *beautified* lady, the lady Elizabeth Carey."

Again, in Greene's *Mamillia,* 1593: "—— although thy person is so bravely *beautified* with the dowries of nature."

Ill and *vile* as the phrase may be, our author has used it again in *The Two Gentlemen of Verona:*

"—— seeing you are *beautified*
"With goodly shape," &c. *Steevens.*

By *beautified* Hamlet means *beautiful.* But Polonius, taking the word in the more strictly grammatical sense of *being made beautiful,* calls it a vile phrase, as implying that his daughter's beauty was the effect of art. *M. Mason.*

[8] *In her excellent white bosom these,*] So, in *The Two Gentlemen of Verona:*

"Thy letters ——,
"Which, being writ to me, shall be deliver'd
"Even in *the milk-white bosom of thy love.*"

See Vol. II, p. 195, n. 7. *Steevens.*

I have followed the quarto. The folio reads:

These *in her excellent white bosom, these,* &c.

In our poet's time the word *These* was usually added at the end of the superscription of letters, but I have never met with it both at the beginning and end. *Malone.*

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O dear Ophelia, *I am ill at these numbers; I have not art to reckon my groans: but that I love thee best, O most best,*[9] *believe it. Adieu.*

Thine evermore, most dear lady, whilst this machine is to him, Hamlet.[1]

This, in obedience, hath my daughter shown me:
And more above,[2] hath his solicitings,
As they fell out by time, by means, and place,
All given to mine ear.

King. But how hath she
Receiv'd his love?

Pol. What do you think of me?

King. As of a man faithful and honourable.

Pol. I would fain prove so. But what might you think,
When I had seen this hot love on the wing,
(As I perceiv'd it, I must tell you that,
Before my daughter told me,) what might you,
Or my dear majesty your queen here, think,
If I had play'd the desk, or table-book;
Or given my heart a working, mute and dumb;
Or look'd upon this love with idle sight;
What might you think?[3] no, I went round[4] to work,

[9] —— *O most best,*] So, in *Acolastus*, a comedy, 1540: "—— that same *most best* redresser or reformer, is God." *Steevens.*

[1] —— *whilst this machine is to him,* Hamlet.] These words will not be ill explained by the conclusion of one of the *Letters of the Paston Family*, Vol. II, p. 43: "—— for your pleasure, *whyle my wytts be my owne.*"

The phrase employed by Hamlet seems to have a French construction. *Pendant que cette machine est à lui.* To be *one's own man* is a vulgar expression, but means much the same as Virgil's

Dum memor ipse mei, dum spiritus hos regit artus. Steevens.

[2] —— *more above,*] is, *moreover, besides. Johnson.*

[3] *If I had play'd the desk, or table-book;*
Or given my heart a working, mute and dumb;
Or look'd upon this love with idle sight;
What might you think?] i. e. If either I had conveyed intelligence between them, and been the confident of their amours [*play'd the desk or table-book,*] or had connived at it, only observed them in secret, without acquainting my daughter with my discovery [*giving my heart a mute and dumb working;*] or lastly, had been negligent in observing the intrigue, and overlooked it [*looked upon this love with idle sight;*] what would you have thought of me? *Warburton.*

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And my young mistress thus did I bespeak;
Lord Hamlet is a prince out of thy sphere;[5]
This must not be: and then I precepts gave her,[6]
That she should lock herself from his resort,
Admit no messengers, receive no tokens.
Which done, she took the fruits of my advice;[7]
And he, repulsed, (a short tale to make)
Fell into a sadness; then into a fast;[8]
Thence to a watch; thence into a weakness;

I doubt whether the first line is rightly explained. It may mean, if I had locked up this secret in my own breast, as closely as if it were confined in a desk or table-book. *Malone.*

Or given my heart a working, mute *and* dumb;] The folio reads—a *winking*. *Steevens.*

The same pleonasm [*mute* and *dumb*] is found in our author's *Rape of Lucrece:*

"And in my hearing be you *mute* and *dumb*." *Malone.*

[4] —— round —] i. e. roundly, without reserve. So Polonius says in the third Act: "—— be *round* with him." *Steevens.*

[5] *Lord Hamlet is a prince out of thy* sphere;] The quarto, 1604, and the first folio, for *sphere*, have *star*. The correction was made by the editor of the second folio. *Malone.*

[6] —— precepts *gave her*,] Thus the folio. The two elder quartos read—*prescripts*. I have chosen the most familiar of the two readings. Polonius has already said to his son—

"And these few *precepts* in thy memory
"Look thou character." *Steevens.*

The original copy in my opinion is right. Polonius had *ordered* his daughter *to lock herself from Hamlet's resort*, &c. See p. 47.

"I would not, in plain terms, from this time forth,
"Have you so slander any moment's leisure
"As to give words or talk with the lord Hamlet:
"Look to't, *I charge* you." *Malone.*

[7] *Which done*, she took *the fruits of my advice;*] She took the *fruits* of advice when she obeyed advice, the advice was then made *fruitful*. *Johnson.*

[8] —— (*a short tale to make*)
Fell into a sadness; then into a fast; &c.] The ridicule of this character is here admirably sustained. He would not only be thought to have discovered this intrigue by his own sagacity, but to have remarked all the stages of Hamlet's disorder, from his sadness to his raving, as regularly as his physician could have done; when all the while the madness was only feigned. The humour of this is exquisite from a man who tells us, with a confidence peculiar to small politicians, that he could find—

"Where truth was hid, though it were hid indeed
"Within the centre." *Warburton.*

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Thence to a lightness; and, by this declension,
Into the madness wherein now he raves,
And all we mourn for.

King. Do you think, 'tis this?

Queen. It may be, very likely.

Pol. Hath there been such a time, (I 'd fain know that)
That I have positively said, *'Tis so*,
When it prov'd otherwise?

King. Not that I know.

Pol. Take this from this, if this be otherwise:
[*Pointing to his Head and Shoulder.*
If circumstances lead me, I will find
Where truth is hid, though it were hid indeed
Within the centre.

King. How may we try it further?

Pol. You know, sometimes he walks four hours together,[9]
Here in the lobby.

Queen. So he does, indeed.

Pol. At such a time I 'll loose my daughter to him:
Be you and I behind an arras then;
Mark the encounter: if he love her not,
And be not from his reason fallen thereon,
Let me be no assistant for a state,
But keep a farm, and carters.[1]

[9] —— four *hours together,*] Perhaps it would be better were we to read indefinitely—

—— for *hours together.* *Tyrwhitt.*

I formerly was inclined to adopt Mr. Tyrwhitt's proposed emendation; but have now no doubt that the text is right. The expression, *four* hours together, *two hours together*, &c. appears to have been common. So, in *King Lear*, Act I:

" *Edm.* Spake you with him?
" *Edg.* Ay, *two hours together.*"

Again, in *The Winter's Tale:*

" —— ay, and have been, any time these *four* hours."

Again, in Webster's *Dutchess of Malfy*, 1623:

" She will muse *four hours together*, and her silence
" Methinks expresseth more than if she spake." *Malone.*

[1] *At such a time I'll loose my daughter to him:*
Be you and I behind an arras then;
Mark the encounter: if he love her not,
And be not from his reason fallen thereon,
Let me be no assistant for a state,
But keep a farm, and carters.] The scheme of throwing Ophe-

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King. We will try it.

Enter HAMLET, *reading.*

Queen. But, look, where sadly the poor wretch comes reading.

Pol. Away, I do beseech you, both away;

lia in Hamlet's way, in order to try his sanity, as well as the address of the King in a former scene to Rosencrantz and Guildenstern:

" —— I entreat you both
" That you vouchsafe your rest here in our court
" Some little time; so by your companies
" *To draw him on to pleasures*, and to gather
" So much as from occasion you may glean,
" Whether aught to us unknown afflicts him thus,
" That, open'd, lies within our remedy; —"

seem to have been formed on the following slight hints in *The Hystory of Hamblet*, bl. let. sig. C 3: "They counselled to try and know if possible, how to discover the intent and meaning of the young prince; and they could find no better nor more fit invention to entrap him, than to set some faire and beautiful woman in a secret place, that with flattering speeches and all the craftiest meanes she could, should purposely seek to allure his mind to have his pleasure of her.—To this end, *certain courtiers* were appointed to lead Hamlet to a solitary place, within the woods, where they brought the woman, inciting him to take their pleasures together. And surely the poore prince at this assault had beene in great danger, if a gentleman that in Horvendille's time had been nourished with him, had not showne himselfe more affectioned to the bringing up he had received with Hamblet, than desirous to please the tyrant.—This gentleman bare the courtiers company, making full account that the least showe of perfect sence and wisdome that Hamblet should make, would be sufficient to cause him to loose his life; and therefore by certaine signes he gave Hamblet intelligence in what danger he was like to fall, if by any meanes he seemed to obeye, or once like the wanton toyes and vicious provocations of the gentlewoman sent thither by his uncle: which much abashed the prince, as then wholly being in affection to the lady. But by her he was likewise informed of the treason, as one that from her infancy loved and favoured him.—The prince in this sort having deceived the courtiers and the lady's expectation, that affirmed and swore hee never once offered to have his pleasure of the woman, although in subtlety he affirmed the contrary, every man thereupon assured themselves that without doubt he was distraught of his sences;—so that as then Fengon's practise took no effect."

Here we find the rude outlines of the characters of Ophelia, and Horatio,—*the gentleman that in the time of* Horvendille (the father of *Hamlet*) *had been nourished with him*. But in this piece there are no traits of the character of *Polonius*. There is indeed

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I 'll board him[2] presently:—O, give me leave.—
[*Exeunt* King, Queen, *and Attendants.*
How does my good lord Hamlet?

Ham. Well, god-'a-mercy.

Pol. Do you know me, my lord?

Ham. Excellent well; you are a fishmonger.

Pol. Not I, my lord.

Ham. Then I would you were so honest a man.

Pol. Honest, my lord?

Ham. Ay, sir; to be honest, as this world goes, is to be one man picked out of ten thousand.

Pol. That 's very true, my lord.

Ham. For if the sun breed maggots in a dead dog, being a god, kissing carrion,——Have you a daughter?[3]

a counsellor, and he places himself in the Queen's chamber behind the arras;—but this is the whole. *Malone.*

[2] *I'll* board *him* —] i. e. accost, address him. See Vol. III, p. 177, n. 5. *Reed.*

[3] *For if the sun breed maggots in a dead dog, being a* god, *kissing carrion,——Have you a daughter?*] [Old copies—a *good* kissing carrion,] The editors seeing Hamlet counterfeit madness, thought they might safely put any nonsense into his mouth. But this strange passage, when set right, will be seen to contain as great and sublime a reflection as any the poet puts into his hero's mouth throughout the whole play. We will first give the true reading, which is this: *For if the sun breed maggots in a dead dog, being a* god, *kissing carrion,——*. As to the sense we may observe, that the illative particle [for] shows the speaker to be reasoning from something he had said before: what that was we learn in these words, *to be honest, as this world goes, is to be one picked out of ten thousand.* Having said this, the chain of ideas led him to reflect upon the argument which libertines bring against Providence from the circumstance of abounding *evil.* In the next speech, therefore, he endeavours to answer that objection, and vindicate Providence, even on a supposition of the fact, that almost all men were wicked. His argument in the two lines in question is to this purpose,—*But why need we wonder at this abounding of evil? For if the sun breed maggots in a dead dog, which though a god, yet shedding its heat and influence upon carrion*——Here he stops short, lest talking too consequentially the hearer should suspect his madness to be feigned; and so turns him off from the subject, by enquiring of his daughter. But the inference which he intended to make, was a very noble one, and to this purpose. If this (says he) be the case, that the effect follows the thing operated upon [*carrion*] and not the thing operating [a *god*] why need we wonder, that the supreme cause of all things diffusing its blessings on mankind,

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Pol. I have, my lord.

who is, as it were, a dead carrion, dead in original sin, man, instead of a proper return of duty, should breed only corruption and vices? This is the argument at length; and is as noble a one in behalf of Providence as could come from the schools of divinity. But this wonderful man had an art not only of acquainting the audience with what his actors *say*, but with what they *think*. The sentiment too is altogether in character, for Hamlet is perpetually moralizing, and his circumstances make this reflection very natural. The same *thought*, something diversified, as on a different occasion, he uses again in *Measure for Measure*, which will serve to confirm these observations:

" The tempter or the tempted, who sins most?
" Not she; nor doth she tempt; but it is I
" That lying by the violet in the sun,
" Do as the carrion does, not as the flower,
" Corrupt by virtuous season."

And the same kind of *expression* is in *Cymbeline*:

" Common-kissing Titan." *Warburton.*

This is a noble emendation, which almost sets the critick on a level with the author. *Johnson.*

Dr. Warburton, in my apprehension, did not understand the passage. I have therefore omitted his laboured comment on it, in which he endeavours to prove that Shakspeare intended it as a vindication of the ways of Providence in permitting evil to abound in the world. He does not indeed pretend that this profound meaning can be drawn from what Hamlet *says*; but that this is what he was *thinking of*; for "this wonderful man (Shakspeare) had an art not only of acquainting the audience with what his actors *say*, but with what they *think*!"

Hamlet's observation is, I think, simply this. He has just remarked that honesty is very rare in the world. To this Polonius assents. The prince then adds, that since there is so little virtue in the world, since corruption abounds every where, and maggots are *bred* by the sun, even in a dead dog, Polonius ought to take care to prevent his daughter from walking in the sun, lest she should prove "a *breeder* of sinners;" for though *conception* in general be a blessing, yet as Ophelia (whom Hamlet supposes to be as frail as the rest of the world,) might chance to *conceive*, it might be a calamity. The maggots *breeding* in a dead dog, seem to have been mentioned merely to introduce the word *conception*; on which word, as Mr. Steevens has observed, Shakspeare has play'd in *King Lear*: and probably a similar quibble was intended here. The word, however, may have been used in its ordinary sense, for *pregnancy*, without any double meaning.

The slight connection between this and the preceding passage, and Hamlet's abrupt question,—*Have you a daughter?* were manifestly intended more strongly to impress Polonius with the belief of the prince's madness.

Perhaps this passage ought rather to be regulated thus:—

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Ham. Let her not walk i' the sun: conception is a blessing;[4] but as your daughter may conceive,—friend, look to 't.

Pol. How say you by that? [*Aside.*] Still harping on

"being a *god-kissing carrion;*" i. e. a carrion that kisses the sun. The participle *being* naturally refers to the last antecedent, *dog*. Had Shakspeare intended that it should be referred to *sun*, he would probably have written—"*he* being a god," &c. We have many similar compound epithets in these plays. Thus, in *King Lear*, Act II, sc. i, Kent speaks of "*ear-kissing* arguments." Again, more appositely, in the play before us:

"New lighted on a *heaven-kissing* hill."

Again, in *The Rape of Lucrece:*

"Threatning *cloud-kissing* Illion with annoy."

However, the instance quoted from *Cymbeline* by Dr. Warburton, "—— *common-kissing* Titan," seems in favour of the regulation that has been hitherto made; for here we find the poet considered the sun as kissing the carrion, not the carrion as kissing the sun. So, also, in *King Henry IV*, P. I: "Did'st thou never see *Titan* kiss a dish of butter?" The following lines also in the historical play of *King Edward III*, 1596, which Shakspeare had certainly seen, are, it must be acknowledged, adverse to the regulation I have suggested:

"The freshest *summer's day* doth soonest *taint*
"The loathed *carrion*, that it seems to *kiss*."

In justice to Dr. Johnson, I should add, that the high eulogium which he has pronounced on Dr. Warburton's emendation, was founded on the *comment* which accompanied it; of which, however, I think, his judgment must have condemned the reasoning, though his goodness and piety approved its moral tendency.

Malone.

As a doubt, at least, may be entertained on this subject, I have not ventured to expunge a note written by a great critick, and applauded by a greater. *Steevens.*

[4] —— conception *is a blessing;* &c.] Thus the quarto. The folio reads thus: "— conception *is a blessing; but* not *as your daughter may* conceive. *Friend, look to 't.*" The meaning seems to be, *conception* (i. e. understanding) is a blessing; but as your daughter may *conceive* (i. e. be pregnant) *friend look to 't*, i. e. have a care of that. The same quibble occurs in the first scene of *King Lear:*

"*Kent.* I cannot *conceive* you, sir.
"*Glo.* Sir, this young fellow's mother *could.*" *Steevens.*

The word *not*, I have no doubt, was inserted by the editor of the folio, in consequence of his not understanding the passage. A little lower we find a similar interpolation in some of the copies, probably from the same cause: "You cannot, sir, take from me any thing that I will *not* more willingly part withal, except my life." *Malone.*

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my daughter:—yet he knew me not at first; he said, I was a fishmonger: He is far gone, far gone: and, truly, in my youth I suffered much extremity for love; very near this. I 'll speak to him again.—What do you read, my lord?

Ham. Words, words, words!

Pol. What is the matter, my lord?

Ham. Between who?

Pol. I mean, the matter that you read, my lord.

Ham. Slanders, sir: for the satirical rogue says here, that old men have grey beards;[5] that their faces are wrinkled; their eyes purging thick amber, and plum-tree gum; and that they have a plentiful lack of wit, together with most weak hams: All which, sir, though I most powerfully and potently believe, yet I hold it not honesty to have it thus set down; for yourself, sir, shall be as old as I am, if, like a crab, you could go backward.

[5] *Slanders, sir: for the* satirical rogue *says here, that old men* &c.] By the *satirical rogue* he means Juvenal in his 10th Satire:

" Da spatium vitæ, multos da Jupiter annos:
" Hoc recto vultu, solum hoc et pallidus optas.
" Sed quàm continuis et quantis longa senectus
" Plena malis! *deformem, et tetrum ante omnia vultum,*
" *Dissimilemque sui,*" &c.

Nothing could be finer imagined for Hamlet, in his circumstances, than the bringing him in reading a description of the evils of long life. *Warburton.*

Had Shakspeare read *Juvenal* in the original, he had met with—

" De temone Britanno, Excidet Arviragus."——

and—

" —— Uxorem, *Posthume*, ducis?"

We should not then have had continually in *Cymbeline*, *Arvirāgus*, and *Posthūmus*. Should it be said that the *quantity* in the *former* word might be forgotten, it is clear from a mistake in the *latter*, that Shakspeare could not possibly have read any one of the Roman poets.

There was a translation of the 10th Satire of Juvenal by Sir John Beaumont, the elder brother of the famous Francis: but I cannot tell whether it was printed in Shakspeare's time. In that age of quotation, every classick might be picked up by *piece-meal.*

I forgot to mention in its proper place, that another description of *Old Age* in *As You Like it*, has been called a parody on a passage in a French poem of Garnier. It is trifling to say any thing about this, after the observation I made in *Macbeth:* but one may remark once for all, that Shakspeare wrote for the *people;* and could not have been so absurd as to bring forward any allusion, which had not been familiarized by some accident or other. *Farmer.*

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Pol. Though this be madness, yet there 's method in it. [*Aside.*] Will you walk out of the air, my lord?

Ham. Into my grave?

Pol. Indeed, that is out o' the air.—How pregnant sometimes his replies are![6] a happiness that often madness hits on, which reason and sanity could not so prosperously be delivered of. I will leave him, and suddenly[7] contrive the means of meeting between him and my daughter.—My honourable lord, I will most humbly take my leave of you.

Ham. You cannot, sir, take from me any thing that I will more willingly part withal; except my life, except my life, except my life.

Pol. Fare you well, my lord.

Ham. These tedious old fools!

Enter ROSENCRANTZ[8] *and* GUILDENSTERN.

Pol. You go to seek the lord Hamlet; there he is.

Ros. God save you, sir! [*To* POL. *Exit* POL.

Guil. My honour'd lord! —

Ros. My most dear lord! —

Ham. My excellent good friends! How dost thou, Guildenstern? Ah, Rosencrantz! Good lads, how do ye both?

Ros. As the indifferent children of the earth.

Guil. Happy, in that we are not overhappy;
On fortune's cap we are not the very button.

Ham. Nor the soles of her shoe?

Ros. Neither, my lord.

Ham. Then you live about her waist, or in the middle of her favours?

Guil. 'Faith, her privates we.

Ham. In the secret parts of fortune? O, most true; she is a strumpet. What news?

[6] *How* pregnant &c.] *Pregnant* is ready, dexterous, apt. So, in *Twelfth Night*:

" ——— a wickedness
" Wherein a *pregnant* enemy doth much." *Steevens.*

[7] —— *and suddenly* &c.] This and the greatest part of the two following lines are omitted in the quartos. *Steevens.*

[8] —— *Rosencrantz* —] There was an embassador of that name in England about the time when this play was written. *Steevens.*

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Ros. None, my lord; but that the world 's grown honest.

Ham. Then is dooms-day near: But your news is not true. [Let me[9] question more in particular: What have you, my good friends, deserved at the hands of fortune, that she sends you to prison hither?

Guil. Prison, my lord!

Ham. Denmark 's a prison.

Ros. Then is the world one.

Ham. A goodly one; in which there are many confines, wards, and dungeons; Denmark being one of the worst.

Ros. We think not so, my lord.

Ham. Why, then 'tis none to you; for there is nothing either good or bad, but thinking makes it so: to me it is a prison.

Ros. Why, then your ambition makes it one; 'tis too narrow for your mind.

Ham. O God! I could be bounded in a nut-shell, and count myself a king of infinite space; were it not that I have bad dreams.

Guil. Which dreams, indeed, are ambition; for the very substance of the ambitious is merely the shadow of a dream.[1]

Ham. A dream itself is but a shadow.

Ros. Truly, and I hold ambition of so airy and light a quality, that it is but a shadow's shadow.

Ham. Then are our beggars, bodies;[2] and our monarchs, and outstretch'd heroes, the beggars' shadows: Shall we to the court? for, by my fay, I cannot reason.

Ros. Guil. We 'll wait upon you.

[9] [*Let me* &c.] All within the crotchets is wanting in the quartos. *Steevens.*

[1] —— *the shadow of a dream.*] Shakspeare has accidentally inverted an expression of Pindar, that the state of humanity is σκιας ὀναρ, the *dream* of a *shadow*. *Johnson.*

So, Davies:

" Man's life is but a dreame, nay, less than so,
" *A shadow of a dreame.*" *Farmer.*

So, in the tragedy of *Darius*, 1603, by Lord Sterline:

" Whose best was but the *shadow of a dream.*" *Steevens.*

[2] *Then are our beggars, bodies;*] Shakspeare seems here to design a ridicule of those declamations against wealth and greatness, that seem to make happiness consist in poverty. *Johnson.*

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Ham. No such matter: I will not sort you with the rest of my servants; for, to speak to you like an honest man, I am most dreadfully attended.] But in the beaten way of friendship, what make you at Elsinore?

Ros. To visit you, my lord; no other occasion.

Ham. Beggar that I am, I am even poor in thanks; but I thank you: and sure, dear friends, my thanks are too dear, a halfpenny.[3] Were you not sent for? Is it your own inclining? Is it a free visitation? Come, come; deal justly with me: come, come; nay, speak.

Guil. What should we say, my lord?

Ham. Any thing—but to the purpose. You were sent for; and there is a kind of confession in your looks, which your modesties have not craft enough to colour: I know, the good king and queen have sent for you.

Ros. To what end, my lord?

Ham. That you must teach me. But let me conjure you, by the rights of our fellowship, by the consonancy of our youth, by the obligation of our ever-preserved love, and by what more dear a better proposer could charge you withal, be even and direct with me, whether you were sent for, or no?

Ros. What say you? [*To* GUIL.

Ham. Nay, then I have an eye of you;[4] [*aside*]—if you love me, hold not off.

Guil. My lord, we were sent for.

Ham. I will tell you, why; so shall my anticipation prevent your discovery, and your secrecy to the king and queen moult no feather. I have of late,[5] (but, wherefore, I know not,) lost all my mirth, forgone all custom of exercises: and, indeed, it goes so heavily with my disposition, that this goodly frame, the earth, seems to me a steril promontory; this most excellent canopy, the air, look

[3] —— *too dear a halfpenny.*] i. e. a halfpenny too dear: they are worth nothing. The modern editors read—*at* a halfpenny. *Malone.*

[4] *Nay, then I have an eye of you;*] An *eye of you* means, I have a glimpse of your meaning. *Steevens.*

[5] *I have of late,* &c.] This is an admirable description of a rooted melancholy sprung from thickness of blood; and artfully imagined to hide the true cause of his disorder from the penetration of these two friends, who were set over him as spies. *Warburton.*

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you, this brave o'erhanging firmament,[6] this majestical roof fretted with golden fire,[7] why, it appears no other thing to me, than a foul and pestilent congregation of vapours. What a piece of work is a man! How noble in reason! how infinite in faculties! in form, and moving, how express and admirable! in action, how like an angel! in apprehension, how like a god! the beauty of the world! the paragon of animals! And yet, to me, what is this quintessence of dust? man delights not me,—nor woman neither; though, by your smiling, you seem to say so.

Ros. My lord, there was no such stuff in my thoughts.

Ham. Why did you laugh then, when I said, *Man delights not me?*

Ros. To think, my lord, if you delight not in man, what lenten entertainment[8] the players shall receive from you: we coted them on the way;[9] and hither are they coming, to offer you service.

[6] —— *this brave o'erhanging* firmament,] Thus the quarto. The folio reads,—*this brave* o'er-*hanging*, this &c. *Steevens.*

[7] —— *this most excellent canopy*, the air,—*this majestical roof fretted with* golden fire,] So, in our author's 21st Sonnet:

" As those *gold candles*, fix'd in heaven's *air*."

Again, in *The Merchant of Venice:*

" —— Look, how the floor of *heaven*
" Is thick inlaid with patins of bright *gold!*" *Malone.*

[8] —— lenten *entertainment* —] i. e. sparing, like the entertainments given in *Lent*. So, in *The Duke's Mistress*, by Shirley, 1631:

" —— to maintain you with bisket,
" Poor John, and half a livery, to read moral virtue
" And *lenten* lectures." *Steevens.*

[9] —— *we* coted *them on the way;*] To *cote* is *to overtake*. I meet with this word in *The Return from Parnassus*, a comedy, 1606:

" —— marry we presently *coted* and outstript them."

Again, in Golding's Ovid's *Metamorphosis*, 1587, Book II:

" With that Hippomenes *coted* her."

Again, in Warner's *Albion's England*, 1602, B. VI, chap. xxx:

" Gods and goddesses for wantonness out-*coted*."

Again, in Drant's translation of Horace's satires, 1567:

" For he that thinks to *coat* all men, and all to overgoe."

Chapman has more than once used the word in his version of the 23d *Iliad*.

See Vol. IV, p. 80, n. 7.

In the laws of coursing, says Mr. Tollet, " a *cote* is when a greyhound goes endways by the side of his fellow, and gives the hare a turn." This quotation seems to point out the etymology of the verb to be from the French *côté*, the side. *Steevens.*

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Ham. He that plays the king, shall be welcome; his majesty shall have tribute of me: the adventurous knight shall use his foil, and target: the lover shall not sigh gratis; the humorous man shall end his part in peace:[1] the clown shall make those laugh, whose lungs are tickled o' the sere;[2] and the lady shall say her mind

[1] —— *shall end his part in peace:*] After these words the folio adds—*the clown shall make those laugh whose lungs are tickled o' the sere.* *Warburton.*

[2] —— *the clown shall make those laugh whose lungs are tickled o' the sere;*] i. e. those who are asthmatical, and to whom laughter is most uneasy. This is the case (as I am told) with those whose lungs are tickled by the *sere* or *serum:* but about these words I am neither very confident, nor very solicitous. Will the following passage in *The Tempest* be of use to any future commentator?

"—— to minister occasion to these gentlemen, who are of such sensible and nimble *lungs*, that they always use to laugh at nothing."

The word *seare* occurs as unintelligibly in an ancient *Dialogue between the Comen Secretary and Jelowsy, touchynge the unstableness of Harlottes*, bl. l. no date:

"And wyll byde whysperynge in the eare,
"Thynk ye her tayle is not light *of the seare?*"

The sense of the adjective *sere* is not more distinct in Chapman's version of the 22d *Iliad:*

"Hector, thou only pestilence, in all mortalitie,
"To my *sere* spirits."

See p. 102, n. 8.

A *sere* is likewise the *talon* of a hawk. *Steevens.*

These words are not in the quarto. I am by no means satisfied with the explanation given, though I have nothing satisfactory to propose. I believe Hamlet only means, that the clown shall make those laugh who have a disposition to laugh; who are pleased with their entertainment. That no asthmatic disease was in contemplation, may be inferred from both the words used, *tickled* and *lungs;* each of which seems to have a relation to laughter, and the latter to have been considered by Shakspeare, as (if I may so express myself,) its natural seat. So, in *Coriolanus:*

"—— with a kind of *smile*,
"Which ne'er came from the *lungs*, —."

Again, in *As you Like it:*

"—— When I did hear
"The motley fool thus moral on the time,
"My *lungs* began to crow like chanticleer."

O' the sere or *of the sere*, means, I think, *by* the sere; but the word *sere* I am unable to explain, and suspect it to be corrupt. Perhaps we should read—*the clown shall make those laugh whose lungs are tickled o' the scene*, i. e. *by* the scene. A similar corrup-

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freely,[3] or the blank verse shall halt for 't.—What players are they?

Ros. Even those you were wont to take such delight in, the tragedians of the city.

Ham. How chances it, they travel?[4] their residence, both in reputation and profit, was better both ways.

Ros. I think, their inhibition comes by the means of the late innovation.[5]

tion has happened in another place, where we find *scare* for *scene*. *Malone.*

[3] —— *the lady shall say her mind* &c.] The lady shall have no obstruction, unless from the lameness of the verse. *Johnson.*

I think, the meaning is,—The lady shall mar the measure of the verse, rather than not express herself freely or fully. *Henderson.*

[4] *How chances it, they* travel?] To *travel* in Shakspeare's time was the technical word, for which we have substituted to *stroll*. So, in the Office-book of Sir Henry Herbert, Master of the Revels to King Charles the First: "1622, Feb. 17, for a certificate for the Palsgrave's servants to *travel* into the country for six weeks, 10s." Again, in Ben Jonson's *Poetaster*, 1601: "If he pen for thee once, thou shalt not need to *travell*, with thy pumps full of gravell, any more, after a blinde jade and a hamper, and stalk upon boords and barrel-heads to an old crackt trumpet." These words are addressed to a player. *Malone.*

[5] *I think, their* inhibition &c.] I fancy this is transposed: Hamlet enquires not about an *inhibition*, but an *innovation*: the answer therefore probably was,—*I think, their* innovation, *that is*, their new practice of strolling, *comes by means of the late* inhibition. *Johnson.*

The drift of Hamlet's question appears to be this,—How chances it they travel?—i. e. *How happens it that they are become strollers?*—Their residence both in reputation and profit, was better both ways.—i. e. *to have remained in a settled theatre, was the more honourable as well as the more lucrative situation.* To this, Rosencrantz replies,—Their *inhibition* comes by means of the late *innovation*.—i. e. *their permission to act any longer at an established house is taken away, in consequence of the* NEW CUSTOM *of introducing personal abuse into their comedies.* Several companies of actors in the time of our author were silenced on account of this licentious practice. Among these (as appears from a passage in *Have with you to Saffron Walden, or Gabriel Harvey's hunt is up*, &c. 1596,) even the children of St. Paul's: "Troth, would he might for mee (that's all the harme I wish him) for then we neede never wishe the playes at *Powles* up againe," &c. See a dialogue between *Comedy* and *Envy* at the conclusion of *Mucedorus*, 1598, as well as the preludium to *Aristippus, or the Jovial Philosopher*, 1630, from whence the following passage is taken: "*Shews* having been long intermitted and forbidden by authority

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Ham. Do they hold the same estimation they did when I was in the city? Are they so followed?

Ros. No, indeed, they are not.

[*Ham.* How comes it?[6] Do they grow rusty?

Ros. Nay, their endeavour keeps in the wonted pace: But there is, sir, an aiery of children,[7] little eyases, that

for their abuses, could not be raised but by conjuring." *Shew* enters, whipped by two furies, and the prologue says to her:

" —— with tears wash off that guilty sin,
" Purge out those ill-digested dregs of wit,
" That use their ink to blot a spotless name:
" Let 's have no one *particular man* traduc'd, —
" —— spare the *persons*," &c.

Alteration, therefore, in the order of the words, seems to be quite unnecessary. *Steevens.*

There will still, however, remain some difficulty. The statute 39 Eliz. ch. 4, which seems to be alluded to by the words—*their inhibition*, was not made to inhibit the players from acting any longer at an *established theatre*, but to prohibit them from *strolling*. " All fencers, (says the act,) bearwards, *common players of enterludes*, and minstrels, *wandering abroad*, (other than players of enterludes, belonging to any baron of this realm or any other honourable personage of greater degree, to be authorized to play under the hand and seal of arms of such baron or personage,) shall be taken, adjudged, and deemed rogues, vagabonds, and sturdy beggars, and shall sustain such pain and punishments as by this act is in that behalf appointed."

This statute, if alluded to, is repugnant to Dr. Johnson's transposition of the text, and to Mr. Steevens's explanation of it as it now stands. Yet Mr. Steevens's explanation may be right: Shakspeare might not have thought of the act of Elizabeth. He could not, however, mean to charge his friends the *old tragedians* with the *new custom* of introducing personal abuse; but must rather have meant, that the old tragedians were inhibited from performing in the city, and obliged to travel, on account of the misconduct of the younger company. See note 7. *Malone.*

By the late *innovation*, it is probable that Rosencrantz means, the late change of government. The word *innovation* is used in the same sense in *The Triumph of Love*, in Fletcher's *Four moral Representations in One*, where Cornelia says to Rinaldo:

" ——— and in poor habits clad.
" (You fled, and the *innovation* laid aside)."

And in Fletcher's [Shirley's] play of *The Coronation*, after Leonatus is proclaimed king, Lysander says to Philocles:

" What dost thou think of this *innovation?*" *M. Mason.*

[6] [Ham. *How comes it?* &c.] The lines enclosed in crotchets are in the folio of 1623, but not in any of the quartos. *Johnson.*

[7] —— *an aiery of children*, &c.] Relating to the play-houses

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cry out on the top of question,[8] and are most tyrannically

then contending, the *Bankside*, the *Fortune*, &c. played by the children of his majesty's chapel. *Pope.*

It relates to the young singing men of the chapel royal, or St. Paul's, of the former of whom perhaps the earliest mention occurs in an anonymous puritanical pamphlet, 1569, entitled *The Children of the Chapel stript and whipt:* "Plaies will neuer be suppresst, while her maiesties unfledged minions flaunt it in silkes and sattens. They had as well be at their popish seruice in the deuils garments," &c.—Again, *ibid:* "Euen in her maiesties chapel do these pretty upstart youthes profane the Lordes day by the lasciuious writhing of their tender limbes, and gorgeous decking of their apparell, in feigning bawdie fables gathered from the idolatrous heathen poets," &c.

Concerning the performances and success of the latter in attracting the best company, I also find the following passage in *Jack Drum's Entertainment, or Pasquil and Katherine*, 1601:

"I saw the *children of Powles* last night;
"And troth they pleas'd me pretty, pretty well,
"The apes, in time, will do it handsomely.
"—— I like the audience that frequenteth there
"With *much applause:* a man shall not be choak'd
"With the stench of garlick, nor be pasted
"To the barmy jacket of a beer-brewer.
"—— Tis a good *gentle audience*," &c.

It is said in Richard Flecknoe's *Short Discourse of the English Stage*, 1664, that "both the children of the chappel and St. Paul's, acted playes, the one in White-Friers, the other behinde the Convocation-house in Paul's; till people growing more precise, and playes more licentious, the theatre of Paul's was quite suppresst, and that of the children of the chappel converted to the use of the children of the revels." *Steevens.*

The suppression to which Flecknoe alludes took place in the year 1583-4; but afterwards both the children of the chapel and of the Revels played at our author's play-house in Blackfriars, and elsewhere: and the choir-boys of St. Paul's at their own house. A certain number of the children of the Revels, I believe, belonged to each of the principal theatres.

Our author cannot be supposed to direct any satire at those young men who played occasionally at his own theatre. Ben Jonson's *Cynthia's Revels*, and his *Poetaster*, were performed there by the children of Queen Elizabeth's chapel, in 1600 and 1601; and *Eastward Hoe* by the children of the revels, in 1604 or 1605. I have no doubt therefore, that the dialogue before us was pointed at the choir-boys of St. Paul's, who in 1601 acted two of Marston's plays, *Antonio and Mellido*, and *Antonio's Revenge*. Many of Lyly's plays were represented by them about the same time; and in 1607, Chapman's *Bussy d'Ambois* was performed by them with great applause. It was probably in this and some

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clapped for 't: these are now the fashion; and so berattle

other noisy tragedies of the same kind, that they *cry'd out on the top of question, and were most tyrannically clapp'd for 't.*

At a later period indeed, after our poet's death, the *Children of the Revels* had an established theatre of their own, and some dispute seems to have arisen between them and the king's company. They performed regularly in 1623, and for eight years afterwards, at the Red Bull in St. John's street; and in 1627, Shakspeare's company obtained an inhibition from the Master of the Revels to prevent their performing any of his plays at their house: as appears from the following entry in Sir Henry Herbert's Office-book, already mentioned: "From Mr. Heminge, in their company's name, to forbid the playinge of any of Shakspeare's playes in the Red Bull company, this 11th of April, 1627,—*5 0 0*." From other passages in the same book it appears that the Children of the Revels composed the Red-Bull company.

We learn from Heywood's *Apology for Actors*, that the little *eyases* here mentioned were the persons who were guilty of the *late innovation*, or practice of introducing personal abuse on the stage, and perhaps for their particular fault the players in general suffered; and the older and more decent comedians, as well as the children, had on some recent occasion been *inhibited* from acting in London, and compelled to turn strollers. This supposition will make the words, concerning which a difficulty has been stated, (see n. 5,) perfectly clear. Heywood's *Apology for Actors*, was published in 1612; the passage therefore which is found in the folio, and not in the quarto, was probably added not very long before that time.

"Now to speake (says Heywood,) of some abuse *lately* crept into the quality, as *an inveighing against the state, the court, the law, the citty, and their governments, with the particularizing of private mens humours, yet alive, noblemen and others*, I know it distastes many; neither do I any way approve it, nor dare I by any means excuse it. The liberty which some arrogate to themselves, committing their bitterness and liberal invectives against all estates *to the mouthes of children*, supposing their juniority to be a priviledge for any rayling, be it never so violent, I could advise all such to curbe, and limit this presumed liberty within the bands of discretion and government. But wise and judicial censurers before whom such complaints shall at any time hereafter come, will not, I hope, impute these abuses to any transgression in *us*, who have ever been carefull and provident to shun the like"

Prynne in his *Histriomastix*, speaking of the state of the stage, about the year 1620, has this passage: "Not to particularise those late new scandalous invective playes, wherein sundry persons of place and eminence [Gundemore, the late lord admiral, lord treasurer, and others,] have been particularly personated, jeared, abused in a gross and scurrilous manner," &c.

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the common stages, (so they call them) that many, wearing rapiers, are afraid of goose quills, and dare scarce come thither.

Ham. What, are they children? who maintains them? how are they escoted?[9] Will they pursue the quality no

The folio, 1623, has—*berattled.* The correction was made by the editor of the second folio.

Since this note was written, I have met with a passage in a letter from Mr. Samuel Calvert to Mr. Winwood, dated March 28, 1605, which might lead us to suppose that the words found only in the folio were added at that time:

"The plays do not forbear to present upon the stage the whole course of this present time, not sparing the king, state, or religion, in so great absurdity, and with such liberty that any would be afraid to hear them." *Memorials*, Vol. II, p. 54.

Malone.

[8] —— *little* eyases, *that cry out on the top of question,*] Little *eyases;* i. e. young nestlings, creatures just out of the egg.

Theobald.

The Booke of Haukying, &c. bl. l. no date, seems to offer another etymology: "And so bycause the best knowledge is by the *eye*, they be called *eyessed.* Ye may also know an *eyesse* by the paleness of the seres of her legges, or the sere over the beake."

Steevens.

From *ey*, Teut. ovum, q. d. qui recens ex ovo emersit. Skinner, *Etymol.* An *aiery* or *eyrie*, as it ought rather to be written, is derived from the same root, and signifies both a young brood of hawks, and the nest itself in which they are produced.

An *eyas* hawk is sometimes written a *nyas* hawk, perhaps from a corruption that has happened in many words in our language, from the latter *n* passing from the end of one word to the beginning of another. However, some etymologists think *nyas* a legitimate word. *Malone.*

—— *cry out on the top of* question,] The meaning seems to be, they ask a common question in the highest note of the voice.

Johnson.

I believe *question*, in this place, as in many others, signifies *conversation, dialogue.* So, in *The Merchant of Venice:* "*Think*, you *question* with a Jew." The meaning of the passage may therefore be—*Children that perpetually recite in the highest notes of voice that can be uttered.* *Steevens.*

When we ask a *question*, we generally end the sentence with a high note. I believe, therefore, that what Rosencrantz means to say is, that these children declaim, through the whole of their parts, in the high note commonly used *at the end of a question*, and are applauded for it. *M. Mason.*

[9] —— *escoted?*] Paid. From the French *escot*, a shot or reckoning. *Johnson.*

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longer than they can sing?[1] will they not say afterwards, if they should grow themselves to common players, (as it is most like,[2] if their means are no better,) their writers do them wrong,[3] to make them exclaim against their own succession?

Ros. 'Faith, there has been much to do on both sides; and the nation holds it no sin, to tarre them on to controversy:[4] there was, for a while, no money bid for argument, unless the poet and the player went to cuffs in the question.

Ham. Is it possible?

Guil. O, there has been much throwing about of brains.

Ham. Do the boys carry it away?

Ros. Ay, that they do, my lord; Hercules and his load too.[5]]

[1] *Will they pursue the* quality *no longer than they can sing?*] Will they follow the *profession* of players no longer than they keep the voices of boys, and sing in the choir? So afterwards, he says to the player, *Come, give us a taste of your* quality; *come, a passionate speech. Johnson.*

So, in the players' *Dedication*, prefixed to the first edition of Fletcher's plays in folio, 1647: "— directed by the example of some who once steered in our *quality*, and so fortunately aspired to chuse your honour, joined with your now glorified brother, patrons to the flowing compositions of the then expired sweet swan of Avon, Shakspeare." Again, in Gosson's *School of Abuse*, 1579: "I speak not of this, as though every one [of the players] that professeth the *qualitie*, so abused himself, —."

"Than they can *sing*," does not merely mean, "than they keep the voices of boys," but is to be understood literally. He is speaking of the choir-boys of St. Paul's. *Malone.*

[2] —— *most like,*] The old copy reads—*like most. Steevens.*
The correction was made by Mr. Pope. *Malone.*

[3] —— *their writers do them wrong,* &c.] I should have been very much surprised if I had *not* found Ben Jonson among the writers here alluded to. *Steevens.*

[4] —— *to* tarre *them on to controversy:*] To provoke any animal to rage, is *to tarre him.* The word is said to come from the Greek ταράσσω *Johnson.*

So, already, in *King John:*

"Like a dog, that is compelled to fight,
"Snatch at his master that doth *tarre* him on." *Steevens.*

[5] —— Hercules *and his load too.*] i. e. they not only carry away the world, but the world-bearer too: alluding to the story of Hercules's relieving Atlas. This is humorous. *Warburton.*

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Ham. It is not very strange: for my uncle[5] is king of Denmark; and those, that would make mouths at him while my father lived, give twenty, forty, fifty, an hundred ducats a-piece, for his picture in little.[7] 'Sblood, there is something in this more than natural, if philosophy could find it out. [*Flourish of Trumpets within.*

Guil. There are the players.

Ham. Gentlemen, you are welcome to Elsinore. Your hands. Come then: the appurtenance of welcome is fashion and ceremony: let me comply with you in this garb;[8] lest my extent to the players, which, I tell you, must show fairly outward, should more appear like entertainment than yours. You are welcome: but my uncle-father, and aunt-mother, are deceived.

Guil. In what, my dear lord?

Ham. I am but mad north-north west: when the wind is southerly,[9] I know a hawk from a handsaw.[1]

The allusion may be to the *Globe* playhouse on the Bankside, the sign of which was *Hercules carrying the Globe.* *Steevens.*

I suppose Shakspeare meant, that the boys drew greater audiences than the elder players of the Globe theatre. *Malone.*

[5] *It is not very strange: for my uncle* —] I do not wonder that the new players have so suddenly risen to reputation, my uncle supplies another example of the facility with which honour is conferred upon new claimants. *Johnson.*

It is not very strange: &c. was originally Hamlet's observation, on being informed that the old tragedians of the city were not so followed as they used to be: [see p. 99, n. 7.] but Dr. Johnson's explanation is certainly just, and this passage connects sufficiently well with that which now immediately precedes it. *Malone.*

[7] —— *in little.*] i. e. in miniature. So, in *The Noble Soldier*, 1634:

" The perfection of all Spaniards, Mars *in little.*"

Again, in Drayton's *Shepherd's Sirena:*

" Paradise *in little* done."

Again, in Massinger's *New Way to pay Old Debts:*

" His father's picture *in little.*" *Steevens.*

[8] —— *let me* comply &c.] Sir T. Hanmer reads,—*let me* compliment *with you.* *Johnson.*

To *comply* is again apparently used in the sense of—to *compliment*, in Act V: " He did *comply* with his dug, before he sucked it." *Steevens.*

[9] —— *when the wind is* southerly, &c.] So, in *Damon and Pythias*, 1582:

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Enter POLONIUS.

Pol. Well be with you, gentlemen!

Ham. Hark you, Guildenstern;—and you too;—at each ear a hearer: that great baby, you see there, is not yet out of his swaddling-clouts.

Ros. Hapily, he 's the second time come to them; for, they say, an old man is twice a child.

Ham. I will prophecy, he comes to tell me of the players; mark it.—You say right, sir: o' Monday morning; 'twas then, indeed.

Pol. My lord, I have news to tell you.

Ham. My lord, I have news to tell you. When Roscius was an actor in Rome, ——

Pol. The actors are come hither, my lord.

Ham. Buz, buz![2]

" But I perceive now, either the *winde is at the south*,
" Or else your tunge cleaveth to the rooffe of your mouth."
Steevens.

[1] —— *I know a hawk from a handsaw.*] This was a common proverbial speech. The Oxford editor alters it to,—*I know a hawk from an* hernshaw, as if the other had been a corruption of the players; whereas the poet found the proverb thus corrupted in the mouth of the people: so that the critick's alteration only serves to show us the original of the expression. *Warburton.*

Similarity of sound is the source of many literary corruptions. In Holborn we have still the sign of the *Bull and Gate*, which exhibits but an odd combination of images. It was originally (as I learn from the title-page of an old play) the *Boulogne* Gate, i. e. one of the gates of *Boulogne*; designed perhaps as a compliment to Henry VIII, who took the place in 1544.

The *Boulogne mouth*, now the *Bull and Mouth*, had probably the same origin, i. e. the *mouth of the harbour of Boulogne*. *Steevens.*

The *Boulogne Gate* was not one of the gates of *Boulogne*, but of *Calais*; and is frequently mentioned as such by Hall and Holinshed. *Ritson.*

[2] *Buz, buz!*] Mere idle talk, the *buz* of the vulgar. *Johnson.*

Buz, buz! are, I believe, only interjections employed to interrupt Polonius. Ben Jonson uses them often for the same purpose, as well as Middleton in *A Mad World, my Masters*, 1608. *Steevens.*

Buz used to be an interjection at Oxford, when any one began a story that was generally known before. *Blackstone.*

Buzzer, in a subsequent scene in this play, is used for a *busy talker*:

" And wants not *buzzers*, to infect his ear
" With pestilent speeches."

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Pol. Upon my honour, ——

Ham. Then came each actor on his ass,[3] ——

Pol. The best actors in the world, either for tragedy, comedy, history, pastoral, pastoral-comical, historical-pastoral, [tragical-historical,[4] tragical-comical-historical-pastoral,] scene individable, or poem unlimited: Seneca cannot be too heavy, nor Plautus too light.[5] For the law of writ, and the liberty, these are the only men.[6]

Again, in *King Lear*:

" —— on every dream,
" Each *buz*, each fancy."

Again, in Trussel's *History of England*, 1635: " —— who, instead of giving redress, suspecting now the truth of the duke of Gloucester's *buzz*," &c.

It is, therefore, probable from the answer of Polonius, that *buz* was used, as Dr. Johnson supposes, for an idle rumour without any foundation.

In Ben Jonson's *Staple of News*, the collector of mercantile intelligence is called Emissary *Buz*. *Malone.*

Whatever may be the origin of this phrase, or rather of this interjection, it is not unusual, even at this day, to cry *buz* to any person who begins to relate what the company had heard before. *M. Mason.*

[3] —— *Then came* &c.] This seems to be a line of a ballad. *Johnson.*

[4] —— *tragical-historical*, &c.] The words within the crotchets I have recovered from the folio, and see no reason why they were hitherto omitted. There are many plays of the age, if not of Shakspeare, that answer to these descriptions. *Steevens.*

[5] —— *Seneca cannot be too heavy, nor Plautus too light*] The tragedies of Seneca were translated into English by Thomas Newton, and others, and published first separate, at different times, and afterwards all together in 1581. One comedy of Plautus, viz. the *Menæchmi*, was likewise translated and published in 1595. *Steevens.*

I believe the frequency of plays performed at publick schools, suggested to Shakspeare the names of *Seneca* and *Plautus* as dramatick authors. *T. Warton.*

Prefixed to a map of Cambridge in the Second Part of *Braunii Civitates*, &c. is an account of the University, by Gulielmus Soonus, 1575. In this curious memoir we have the following passage: " Januarium, Februarium, & Martium menses, ut noctis tædix fallant in spectaculis populo exhibendis ponunt tanta elegantia, tanta actionis dignitate, ea vocis & vultus moderatione, ea magnificentia, ut si *Plautus*, aut Terentius, aut *Seneca* revivisceret mirarentur suas ipsi fabulas, majoremque quam cum inspectante popul. Rom. agerentur, voluptatem credo caperent. Euripidem vero, Sophoclem & Aristophanem, etiam Athenarum suarum tæderet." *Steevens.*

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Ham. O Jephthah, judge of Israel,—what a treasure hadst thou!

Pol. What a treasure had he, my lord?

Ham. Why—*One fair daughter, and no more,*
The which he loved passing well.

Pol. Still on my daughter. [*aside.*

Ham. Am I not i' the right, old Jephthah?

Pol. If you call me Jephthah, my lord, I have a daughter that I love passing well.

Ham. Nay, that follows not.

Pol. What follows then, my lord?

Ham. Why, *As by lot, God wot,*[7] and then, you know,

[6] *For the law of* writ, *and the liberty, these are the only men.*] All the modern editions have,—*the law of* wit, *and the liberty*; but both my old copies have—*the law of* writ, I believe rightly. *Writ*, for *writing, composition. Wit* was not, in our author's time, taken either for *imagination*, or *acuteness*, or *both together*, but for *understanding*, for the faculty by which we *apprehend* and *judge*. Those who wrote of the human mind, distinguished its primary powers into *wit* and *will*. Ascham distinguishes *boys* of tardy and of active faculties into *quick wits* and *slow wits*. *Johnson.*

That *writ* is here used for *writing*, may be proved by the following passage in *Titus Andronicus:*

"Then all too late I bring this fatal *writ*." *Steevens.*

The old copies are certainly right. *Writ* is used for *writing* by authors contemporary with Shakspeare. Thus, in *The Apologie of Pierce Pennilesse*, by Thomas Nashe, 1593: "For the lowsie circumstance of his poverty before his death, and sending that miserable *writte* to his wife, it cannot be but thou liest, learned Gabriel." Again, in Bishop Earle's *Character of a mere dull Physician*, 1638: "Then followes a *writ* to his drugger, in a strange tongue, which he understands, though he cannot conster."

Again, in *King Henry VI*, P. II:

"Now, good my lord, let's see the devil's *writ*." *Malone.*

[7] Why, *As by lot, God wot,* — &c.] The old song from which these quotations are taken, I communicated to Dr. Percy, who has honoured it with a place in the second and third editions of his *Reliques of ancient English Poetry*. In the books belonging to the Stationers' Company, there are two entries of this Ballad among others. "A ballet intituled the Songe of Jepthah's doughter" &c. 1567, Vol. I, fol. 162. Again: "*Jeffa Judge of Israel*," p. 93, Vol. III, Dec. 14, 1624.

This story was also one of the favourite subjects of ancient tapestry. *Steevens.*

There is a Latin tragedy on the subject of *Jeptha*, by John Christopherson, in 1546, and another by Buchanan, in 1554. A third by Du Plessis Mornay, is mentioned by Prynne, in his *His-*

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It came to pass, As most like it was,—The first row of the pious chanson[8] will show you more; for look, my abridgment[9] comes.

Enter Four or Five Players.

You are welcome, masters; welcome, all:—I am glad to see thee well:—welcome, good friends.—O, old friend! Why, thy face is valanced[1] since I saw thee last; Com'st

triomastix. The same subject had probably been introduced on the English stage. *Malone*.

[8] —— *the* pious chanson —] It is *pons chansons* in the first folio edition. The old ballads sung on bridges, and from thence called *Pons chansons*. Hamlet is here repeating ends of old songs. *Pope*.

It is *pons chansons* in the quarto too. I know not whence the *rubrick* has been brought, yet it has not the appearance of an arbitrary addition. The titles of old ballads were never printed red; but perhaps *rubrick* may stand for *marginal explanation*. *Johnson*.

There are five large volumes of ballads in Mr. Pepys's collection in Magdalen's College Library, Cambridge, some as ancient as Henry VII's reign, and not one red letter upon any one of the titles. *Grey*.

The words, *of the rubrick*, were first inserted by Mr. Rowe, in his edition in 1709. The old quartos in 1604, 1605, and 1611, read, *pious chanson*, which gives the sense wanted, and I have accordingly inserted it in the text.

The *pious chansons* were a kind of *Christmas carols*, containing some scriptural history thrown into loose rhymes, and sung about the streets by the common people when they went at that season to solicit alms. Hamlet is here repeating some scraps from a song of this kind, and when Polonius enquires what follows them, he refers him to the *first row* (i. e. division) of one of these, to obtain the information he wanted. *Steevens*.

[9] —— *my abridgment* —] He calls the players afterwards, *the brief chronicles of the times*; but I think he now means only *those who will shorten my talk*. *Johnson*.

An *abridgment* is used for a dramatick piece in *A Midsummer-Night's Dream*, Act V, sc. i:

"Say, what *abridgment* have you for this evening?"

but it does not commodiously apply to this passage. See Vol. II, p. 355, n. 3. *Steevens*.

[1] —— *thy face is* valanced —] i. e. fringed with a beard. The valance is the fringes or drapery hanging round the tester of a bed. *Malone*.

Dryden, in one of his epilogues, has the following line:

"Criticks in plume, and white *valancy* wig." *Steevens*.

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thou to beard me[2] in Denmark?—What! my young lady and mistress! By-'r-lady, your ladyship is nearer to heaven, than when I was you last, by the altitude of a chopine.[3]

[2] —— *to* beard *me* —] To *beard*, anciently signified to *set at defiance*. So, in *King Henry IV*, P. I:

" No man so potent breathes upon the ground,
" But I will *beard* him." *Steevens.*

[3] —— *by the altitude of a* chopine.] A *chioppine* is a high shoe, or rather, a clog, worn by the Italians, as in T. Heywood's *Challenge of Beauty*, Act V, Song:

" The Italian in her high *chopeene*,
" Scotch lass, and lovely froe too;
" The Spanish Donna, French Madame,
" He doth not feare to go to."

So, in Ben Jonson's *Cynthia's Revels:*

" I do wish myself one of my mistress's *cioppini*." Another demands, why would he be one of his mistress's *cioppini?* a third answers, " because he would make her *higher*."

Again, in Decker's *Match me in London*, 1631: " I'm only taking instructions to make her a lower *chopeene;* she finds fault that she's lifted too high."

Again, in Chapman's *Cæsar and Pompey*, 1613:

" —————— and thou shalt
" Have *chopines* at commandement to an height
" Of life thou canst wish."

See the figure of a Venetian courtezan among the *Habiti Antichi &c. di Cesare Vecellio*, p. 114, edit. 1598: and (as Mr. Ritson observes) among the *Diversarum Nationum Habitus*, Padua, 1592. *Steevens.*

Tom Coryat, in his *Crudities*, 1611, p. 262, calls them *chapineys*, and gives the following account of them: " There is one thing used of the Venetian women, and some others dwelling in the cities and townes subject to the signiory of Venice, that is not to be observed (I thinke) amongst any other women in Christendome: which is common in Venice, that no woman whatsoever goeth without it, either in her house or abroad, *a thing made of wood and covered with leather of sundry colors, some with white, some redde, some yellow. It is called* a chapiney, *which they wear under their shoes.* Many of them are curiously painted; some also of them I have seen fairely gilt: so uncomely a thing (in my opinion) that it is pitty this foolish custom is not cleane banished and exterminated out of the citie. *There are many of these chapineys of a great height, even half a yard high,* which maketh many of their women that are very short, seeme much taller than the tallest women we have in England. Also I have heard it observed among them, that by how much the nobler a woman is, by so much the higher are her *chapineys*. All their gentlewomen and most of their wives and widowes that are of any wealth, are assisted and supported eyther by men or women, when they walke

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Pray God, your voice, like a piece of uncurrent gold, be not cracked within the ring.[4]—Masters, you are all welcome. We 'll e'en to 't like French falconers,[5] fly at any thing we see: We 'll have a speech straight: Come, give us a taste of your quality; come, a passionate speech.

1 *Play.* What speech, my lord?

abroad, to the end they may not fall. They are borne up most commonly by the left arme, otherwise they might quickly take a fall." *Reed.*

Again, in Marston's *Dutch Courtezan*, 1605: "Dost not weare high corked shoes, *chopines?*"

The word ought rather to be written *chapine*, from *chapin*, Span. which is defined by Minsheu in his *Spanish Dictionary*: "*a high cork shoe.*" There is no synonymous word in the Italian language, though the *Venetian* ladies, as we are told by Lassels, "wear high heel'd shoes, like stilts," &c. *Malone.*

[4] —— *be not cracked within the ring.*] That is, *cracked too much for use.* This is said to a young player who acted the parts of women. *Johnson.*

I find the same phrase in *The Captain*, by Beaumont and Fletcher:

"Come to be married to my lady's woman,
"After she's *crack'd in the ring.*"

Again, in Ben Jonson's *Magnetick Lady*:

"Light gold, and *crack'd within the ring.*"

Again, in *Your Five Gallants*, 1608: "Here 's Mistresse Rosenoble has lost her maidenhead, *crackt in the ring.*"

Again, in *Ram-Alley, or Merry Tricks*, 1611:

"—— not a penny the worse
"For a little use, *whole within the ring.*"

Again, in Decker's *Honest Whore*, 1635: "You will not let my oaths be *cracked in the ring*, will you?" *Steevens.*

The following passage in Lyly's *Woman in the Moon*, 1597, as well as that in Fletcher's *Captain*, might lead us to suppose that this phrase sometimes conveyed a wanton allusion: "Well, if she were twenty grains lighter, refuse her, provided always she be not *clipt within the ring.*" *T. C.*

[5] —— *like* French *falconers,*] The amusement of falconry was much cultivated in France. In *All 's Well that Ends Well*, Shakspeare has introduced an *astringer* or falconer at the French court. Mr. Tollet, who has mentioned the same circumstance, likewise adds that it is said in *Sir Thomas Browne's Tracts*, p. 116, that "the *French* seem to have been the first and noblest falconers in the western part of Europe;" and, "that the *French* king sent over his falconers to show that sport to King James the First." See Weldon's *Court of King James.* *Steevens.*

—— *like* French *falconers,*] Thus the folio. Quarto:—like *friendly* falconers. *Malone.*

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Ham. I heard thee speak me a speech once,—but it was never acted; or, if it was, not above once: for the play, I remember, pleased not the million; 'twas caviare to the general:[6] but it was (as I received it, and others, whose judgments, in such matters, cried in the top of mine,[7]) an excellent play; well digested in the scenes, set down with as much modesty[8] as cunning. I remem-

[6] —— caviare *to the* general:] Giles Fletcher, in his *Russe Commonwealth*, 1591, p. 11, says in Russia they have divers kinds of fish "very good and delicate: as the Bellouga & Bellougina of four or five elnes long, the Ositrina & Sturgeon, but not so thick nor long. These four kind of fish breed in the Wolgha and are catched in great plenty, and served thence into the whole realme for a good food. Of the roes of these four kinds they make very great store of Icary or *Caveary*." See also, Mr. Ritson's *Remarks*, &c. on Shakspeare, (edit. 1778) p. 199. *Reed.*

Ben Jonson has ridiculed the introduction of these foreign delicacies in his *Cynthia's Revels*: "He doth learn to eat Anchovies, Macaroni, Bovoli, Fagioli, and *Caviare*," &c.

Again, in *The Muses' Looking Glass*, by Randolph, 1638:

"—— the pleasure that I take in spending it,
"To feed on *caviare*, and eat anchovies."

Again, in *The White Devil, or Vittoria Corombona*, 1612:

"———— one citizen
"Is lord of two fair manors that call'd you master,
"Only for *caviare*."

Again, in Marston's *What you will*, 1607:

"—— a man can scarce eat good meat,
"Anchovies, *caviare*, but he's satired." *Steevens.*

Florio, in his *Italian Dictionary*, 1598, defines, *Caviaro*, "a kinde of salt meat, used in Italie, like black sope; it is made of the roes of fishes."

Lord Clarendon uses *the general* for *the people*, in the same manner as it is used here: "And so by undervaluing many particulars, (which they truly esteemed) as rather to be consented to than that *the general* should suffer,—." Book V, p. 530. *Malone.*

[7] —— *cried in the top of mine,*] i. e. whose judgment I had the highest opinion of. *Warburton.*

I think it means only, that *were higher than mine. Johnson.*

Whose judgment, in such matters, was in much higher vogue than mine. *Heath.*

Perhaps it means only—whose judgment was more clamourously delivered than mine. We still say of a bawling actor, that he speaks *on the top of his voice. Steevens.*

To *over-top* is a hunting term applied to a dog when he gives more tongue than the rest of the cry. To this, I believe, Hamlet refers, and he afterwards mentions a CRY *of players. Henley.*

[8] —— *set down with as much* modesty —] *Modesty*, for *simplicity. Warburton.*

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salt ber, one said there were no sallets[9] in the lines, to make the matter savoury; nor no matter in the phrase, that might indite the author of affection:[1] but called it, an honest method,[2] as wholesome[3] as sweet, and by very much more handsome than fine. One speech in it I chiefly loved: 'twas Æneas' tale to Dido; and thereabout of it especially, where he speaks of Priam's slaughter: If it live in your memory, begin at this line; let me see, let me see;—

The rugged Pyrrhus, like the Hyrcanian beast,[4] —

'tis not so; it begins with Pyrrhus.

9 —— *there were no* sallets &c.] Such is the reading of the old copies. I know not why the later editors continued to adopt the alteration of Mr. Pope, and read,—no *salt*, &c.

Mr. Pope's alteration may indeed be in some degree supported by the following passage in Decker's *Satiromastix*, 1602: "—a prepar'd troop of gallants, who shall distaste every *unsalted* line in their fly-blown comedies." Though the other phrase was used as late as in the year 1665, in *A Banquet of Jests*, &c. "—— for junkets, joci; and for curious *sallets*, sales." *Steevens.*

1 ——indite *the author of affection:*] *Indite*, for *convict. Warburton.*

—— *indite* the author of *affection:*] i. e. convict the author of being a fantastical *affected* writer. Maria calls Malvolio an *affectioned* ass: i. e. an *affected* ass; and in *Love's Labour 's Lost*, Nathaniel tells the Pedant, that his reasons "have been witty, without *affection*."

Again, in the translation of *Castiglione's Courtier*, by Hobby, 1556: "Among the chiefe conditions and qualityes in a waiting-gentlewoman," is, "to flee *affection* or curiosity."

Again, in Chapman's Preface to Ovid's *Banquet of Sense*, 1595: "Obscuritie in *affection* of words and indigested concets, is pedanticall and childish." *Steevens.*

2 —— *but called it, an honest method,*] Hamlet is telling how much his judgment differed from that of others. *One said, there was no sallets in the lines*, &c. *but called it an honest method.* The author probably gave it,—*But I called it an honest method*, &c. *Johnson.*

—— *an* honest *method,*] *Honest*, for *chaste. Warburton.*

3 —— *as wholesome* &c.] This passage was recovered from the quartos by Dr. Johnson. *Steevens.*

"Fabula nullius veneris, morataque recte." *M. Mason.*

4 *The rugged Pyrrhus*, &c.] Mr. Malone once observed to me, that Mr. Capell supposed the speech uttered by the *Player* before *Hamlet*, to have been taken from an ancient drama, entitled, "*Dido Queen of Carthage.*" I had not then the means of justifying or confuting his remark, the piece alluded to having escaped

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The rugged Pyrrhus,—he, whose sable arms,

the hands of the most liberal and industrious collectors of such curiosities. Since, however, I have met with this performance, and am therefore at liberty to pronounce that it did not furnish our author with more than a general hint for his description of the death of Priam, &c.; unless with reference to—

" —— the whiff and *wind* of his fell sword
" The unnerved father falls,——."

we read, ver. *:

" And with the *wind* thereof the king fell down;"

and can make out a resemblance between—

" So as a painted tyrant, Pyrrhus stood;"

and ver. **:

" So leaning on his sword, he stood stone still."

The greater part of the following lines are surely more ridiculous in themselves, than even Shakspeare's happiest vein of burlesque or parody could have made them:

" At last came *Pirrhus* fell and full of ire,
" His harnesse dropping bloud, and on his speare
" The mangled head of *Priams* youngest sonne;
" And after him his band of Mirmidons,
" With balles of wild-fire in their murdering pawes,
" Which made the funerall flame that burnt faire *Troy:*
" All which hemd me about, crying, this is he.
" *Dido.* Ah, how could poor Æneas scape their hands?
" *Æn.* My mother *Venus*, jealous of my health,
" Convaid me from their crooked nets and bands:
" So I escapt the furious *Pirrhus* wrath,
" Who then ran to the pallace of the King,
" And at *Jove's* Altar finding *Priamus*,
" About whose withered neck hung Hecuba,
" Foulding his hand in hers, and joyntly both
" Beating their breasts and falling on the ground,
" He with his faulchions point raisde up at once;
" And with *Megeras* eyes stared in their face,
" Threatning a thousand deaths at every glaunce.
" To whom the aged king thus trembling spoke: &c.—
" Not mov'd at all, but smiling at his teares,
" This butcher, whil'st his hands were yet held up,
" Treading upon his breast, stroke off his hands.
" *Dido.* O end, Æneas, I can hear no more.
" *Æn.* At which the franticke queene leapt on his face,
" And in his eyelids hanging by the nayles,
" A little while prolong'd her husband's life:
" At last the souldiers puld her by the heeles,
" And swong her howling in the emptie ayre,
" Which sent an echo to the wounded king:
" Whereat he lifted up his bedred lims,
" And would have grappeld with Achilles sonne,
" Forgetting both his want of strength and hands;

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Black as his purpose, did the night resemble
When he lay couched in the ominous horse,
Hath now this dread and black complexion smear'd
With heraldry more dismal; head to foot
Now is he total gules;[5] *horridly trick'd*[6]
With blood of fathers, mothers, daughters, sons,
Bak'd and impasted with the parching streets,
That lend a tyrannous and a damned light
To their lord's murder: Roasted in wrath, and fire,
And thus o'er-sized with coagulate gore,
With eyes like carbuncles,[7] *the hellish Pyrrhus*
Old grandsire Priam seeks;—So proceed you.[8]

" Which he disdaining, whiskt his sword about,
* " And with the *wound* thereof the king fell downe:
" Then from the navell to the throat at once,
" He ript old Priam; at whose latter gaspe
" Jove's marble statue gan to bend the brow,
" As lothing Pirrhus for this wicked act:
" Yet he undaunted took his fathers flagge,
" And dipt it in the old kings chill cold bloud,
" And then in triumph ran into the streetes,
" Through which he could not passe for slaughtred men:
** " So leaning on his sword he stood stone still,
" Viewing the fire wherewith rich Ilion burnt." Act II.

The exact title of the play from which these lines are copied, is as follows: The—Tragedie of Dido | *Queen of Carthage* | Played by the Children of her | *Majesties Chapel* | Written by Christopher Marlowe, and | *Thomas Nash, Gent.* | —Actors | *Jupiter.* | *Ganimed.* | *Venus* | *Cupid.* | *Juno.* | *Mercurie, or—Hermes,* | *Æneas.* | *Ascanius.* | *Dido.* | *Anna.* | *Achates.* | *Ilioneus.* | *Iarbas.* | *Cloanthes.* | *Sergestus.* | At London, | Printed, by the Widdowe *Orwin*, for *Thomas Woodcocke*, and | are to be solde at his shop, in Paules Church-yeard, at | the signe of the black Beare. 1594. | *Steevens.*

[5] *Now is he total* gules;] *Gules* is a term in the barbarous jargon peculiar to heraldry, and signifies *red.* Shakspeare has it again in *Timon of Athens:*

" With man's blood paint the ground; *gules, gules.*"

Heywood, in his Second Part of the *Iron Age*, has made a verb from it:

" —— old Hecuba's reverend locks
" Be *gul'd* in slaughter —." *Steevens.*

[6] —— *trick'd* —] i. e. smeared, painted. An heraldick term. See Vol. V, p. 162, n. 8. *Malone.*

[7] *With* eyes *like* carbuncles,] So, in Milton's *Paradise Lost*, B. IX, l. 500:

" —— and *carbuncles* in his *eyes.*" *Steevens.*

[8] *So proceed you.*] These words are not in the folio. *Malone.*

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Pol. 'Fore God, my lord, well spoken; with good accent, and good discretion.

1 Play. *Anon he finds him*
Striking too short at Greeks; his antique sword,
Rebellious to his arm, lies where it falls,
Repugnant to command: Unequal match'd,
Pyrrhus at Priam drives; in rage, strikes wide;
But with the whiff and wind of his fell sword
The unnerved father falls. Then senseless Ilium,
Seeming to feel this blow, with flaming top
Stoops to his base; and with a hideous crash
Takes prisoner Pyrrhus' ear: for, lo! his sword
Which was declining on the milky head
Of reverend Priam, seem'd i' the air to stick:
So, as a painted tyrant,[9] *Pyrrhus stood;*
And, like a neutral to his will and matter,
Did nothing.
But, as we often see, against some storm,
A silence in the heavens, the rack stand still,
The bold winds speechless, and the orb below
As hush as death:[1] *anon, the dreadful thunder*
Doth rend the region: So, after Pyrrhus' pause,
A roused vengeance sets him new a work;
And never did the Cyclops' hammers fall
On Mars's armour,[2] *forg'd for proof eterne,*
With less remorse than Pyrrhus' bleeding sword

[9] —— *as a* painted *tyrant,*] Shakspeare was probably here thinking of the tremendous personages often represented in old tapestry, whose uplifted swords *stick in the air,* and *do nothing.* *Malone.*

[1] —— *as we often see,* against some storm, ——
The bold winds *speechless, and the orb below*
As hush *as death:*] So, in *Venus and Adonis:*
"Even as the *wind is hush'd before it raineth.*"
This line leads me to suspect that Shakspeare wrote—the bold *wind* speechless. Many similar mistakes have happened in these plays, where the word ends with the same letter with which the next begins. *Malone.*

[2] *And never did the Cyclops' hammers fall*
On Mars's armour, &c.] This thought appears to have been adopted from the 3d Book of Sidney's *Arcadia:* "Vulcan, when he wrought at his wive's request Æneas an armour, made not his hammer beget a greater sound than the swords of those noble knights did" &c. *Steevens.*

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Now falls on Priam.—
Out, out, thou strumpet, Fortune! All you gods,
In general synod, take away her power;
Break all the spokes and fellies from her wheel,
And bowl the round nave down the hill of heaven,
As low as to the fiends!
Pol. This is too long.
Ham. It shall to the barber's, with your beard.—Pr'ythee, say on:—He 's for a jig, or a tale of bawdry,[3] or he sleeps:—say on: come to Hecuba.
1 Play. *But who, ah woe!*[4] *had seen the mobled queen*[5] ——

[3] —— *He 's for a* jig, *or a tale of bawdry,*] See note on "—— your only *jig-maker*," Act III, sc. ii. *Steevens.*

A *jig*, in our poet's time, signified a ludicrous metrical composition, as well as a dance. Here it is used in the former sense. So, in Florio's *Italian Dict.* 1598: "Frottola, a countrie *jigg*, or round, or countrie song, or wanton verses." *Malone.*

[4] *But who,* ah *woe!*] Thus the quarto, except that it has—*a* woe. *A* is printed instead of *ah* in various places in the old copies. *Woe* was formerly used adjectively for *woeful.* So, in *Antony and Cleopatra:*

"Woe, woe are we, sir, you may not live to wear
"All your true followers out."

The folio reads—But who, *O who*, &c. *Malone.*

[5] —— *the* mobled *queen* —] *Mobled* or *mabled* signifies, *veiled.* So, Sandys, speaking of the Turkish women, says, *their heads and faces are* mabled *in fine linen, that no more is to be seen of them than their eyes.* Travels. *Warburton.*

Mobled signifies *huddled, grossly covered. Johnson.*

I meet with this word in Shirley's *Gentleman of Venice:*

"The moon does *mobble* up herself." *Farmer.*

Mobbled is, I believe, no more than a depravation of *muffled.* It is thus corrupted in Ogilby's *Fables*, Second Part:

"*Mobbled* nine days in my considering cap,
"Before my eyes beheld the blessed day."

In the West this word is still used in the same sense; and that is the meaning of *mobble* in Dr. Farmer's quotation. *H. White.*

The *mabled* queen, (or *mobled* queen, as it is spelt in the quarto,) means, the queen attired in a large, coarse, and careless head-dress. A few lines lower we are told she had "a *clout* upon that head, where late the diadem stood."

To *mab*, (which in the North is pronounced *mob*, and hence the spelling of the old copy in the present instance,) says Ray in his Dict. of North Country words, is "to dress carelessly. *Mabs are slatterns.*"

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Ham. The mobled queen?

Pol. That's good; mobled queen is good.

1 Play. *Run barefoot up and down, threat'ning the flames*
With bisson rheum;[6] *a clout upon that head,*
Where late the diadem stood; and, for a robe,
About her lank and all o'er-teemed loins,
A blanket, in the alarm of fear caught up;
Who this had seen, with tongue in venom steep'd,
'Gainst fortune's state would treason have pronounc'd:
But if the gods themselves did see her then,
When she saw Pyrrhus make malicious sport
In mincing with his sword her husband's limbs;
The instant burst of clamour that she made,
(Unless things mortal move them not at all)
Would have made milch[7] *the burning eye of heaven,*
And passion in the gods. passionate

Pol. Look, whether he has not turned his colour, and has tears in 's eyes.—Pr'ythee, no more.

Ham. 'Tis well; I 'll have thee speak out the rest of this soon.—Good my lord, will you see the players well bestowed? Do you hear, let them be well used; for they are the abstract, and brief chronicles, of the time: After your death you were better have a bad epitaph, than their ill report while you live.

Pol. My lord, I will use them according to their desert.

Ham. Odd's bodikin, man, much better: Use every man after his desert, and who shall 'scape whipping?

The ordinary morning head-dress of ladies continued to be distinguished by the name of a *mab*, to almost the end of the reign of George the Second. The folio reads—the *inobled* queen. *Malone.*

In the counties of Essex and Middlesex, this morning cap has always been called—a *mob*, and not a *mab*. My spelling of the word therefore agrees with its most familiar pronunciation. *Steevens.*

[6] *With* bisson *rheum;*] *Bisson* or *beesen*, i. e. blind. A word still in use in some parts of the North of England.

So, in *Coriolanus:* "What harm can your *bisson* conspectuities glean out of this character?" *Steevens.*

[7] —— *made* milch —] Drayton in the 13th Song of his *Polyolbion* gives this epithet to dew: "Exhaling the *milch* dew," &c. *Steevens.*

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Use them after your own honour and dignity: The less they deserve, the more merit is in your bounty. Take them in.

Pol. Come, sirs. [*Exit* POL. *with some of the* Players.

Ham. Follow him, friends: we 'll hear a play to-morrow.—Dost thou hear me, old friend; can you play the murder of Gonzago?

1 *Play.* Ay, my lord.

Ham. We 'll have it to-morrow night. You could, for a need, study a speech of some dozen or sixteen lines, which I would set down, and insert in 't? could you not?

1 *Play.* Ay, my lord.

Ham. Very well.—Follow that lord; and look you mock him not. [*Exit* Player.] My good friends, [*to* Ros. *and* GUIL.] I 'll leave you till night: you are welcome to Elsinore.

Ros. Good my lord! [*Exeunt* Ros. *and* GUIL.

Ham. Ay, so, God be wi' you:—Now I am alone.
O, what a rogue and peasant slave am I!
Is it not monstrous, that this player here,[8]
But in a fiction, in a dream of passion,
Could force his soul so to his own conceit,

[8] *Is it not monstrous, that this player here,*] It should seem from the complicated nature of such parts as Hamlet, Lear, &c. that the time of Shakspeare had produced some excellent performers. He would scarce have taken the pains to form characters which he had no prospect of seeing represented with force and propriety on the stage.

His plays indeed, by their own power, must have given a different turn to acting, and almost new-created the performers of his age. Mysteries, Moralities, and Enterludes, afforded no materials for art to work on, no discriminations of character or variety of appropriated language. From tragedies like *Cambyses*, *Tamburlaine*, and *Jeronymo*, nature was wholly banished; and the comedies of *Gammer Gurton*, *Common Condycyons*, and *The Old Wives Tale*, might have had justice done to them by the lowest order of human beings.

Sanctius his animal, mentisque capacius altæ

was wanting, when the dramas of Shakspeare made their first appearance; and to these we were certainly indebted for the excellence of actors who could never have improved so long as their sensibilities were unawakened, their memories burthened only by pedantick or puritanical declamation, and their manners vulgarized by pleasantry of as low an origin. *Steevens.*

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That, from her working, all his visage wann'd;[9]
Tears in his eyes, distraction in 's aspéct,[1]

[9] —— *all his visage* wann'd;] [The folio—*warm'd.*] This might do, did not the old quarto lead us to a more exact and pertinent reading, which is—visage *wan'd;* i. e. turned *pale* or *wan.* For so the visage appears when the mind is thus affectioned, and not *warm'd* or flush'd. *Warburton.*

[1] *That, from her working, all his visage* wann'd;
Tears in his eyes, distraction *in 's aspéct,*] *Wan'd* (*wann'd* it should have been spelt) is the reading of the quarto, which Dr. Warburton, I think rightly, restored. The folio reads *warm'd,* for which Mr. Steevens contends in the following note:

"The working of the soul, and the effort to shed tears, will give a colour to the actor's face, instead of taking it away. The visage is always *warm'd,* and flush'd by any unusual exertion in a passionate speech; but no performer was ever yet found, I believe, whose feelings were of such exquisite sensibility as to produce paleness in any situation in which the drama could place him. But if players were indeed possessed of that power, there is no such circumstance in the speech uttered before Hamlet, as could introduce the *wanness* for which Dr. Warburton contends." The same expression, however, is found in the fourth Book of Stanyhurst's translation of the *Æneid:*

"And eke all her visage *waning* with murther approaching."

Whether an actor *can produce paleness,* it is, I think, unnecessary to enquire. That Shakspeare *thought* he could, and considered the speech in question as likely to produce *wanness,* is proved decisively by the words which he has put into the mouth of Polonius in this scene; which add such support to the original reading, that I have without hesitation restored it. Immediately after the Player has finished his speech, Polonius exclaims,

"Look, whether he has not *turned his colour,* and has *tears in his eyes.*" Here we find the effort to shed tears, *taking away,* not *giving* a colour. If it be objected, that by *turned his colour,* Shakspeare meant that the player *grew red,* a passage in *King Richard III,* in which the poet is again describing an actor, who is master of his art, will at once answer the objection:

"*Rich.* Come, cousin, canst thou *quake,* and *change thy colour?*
"Murder thy breath in middle of a word;
"And then again begin, and stop again,
"As if thou wert *distraught and mad with terror?*
"*Buck.* Tut, I can counterfeit the *deep tragedian,*
"*Tremble* and start at wagging of a straw," &c.

The words *quake,* and *terror,* and *tremble,* as well as the whole context, show, that by "*change thy colour,*" Shakspeare meant *grow pale. Malone.*

The word *aspect* (as Dr. Farmer very properly observes) was

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A broken voice, and his whole function suiting
With forms to his conceit? And all for nothing!
For Hecuba!
What 's Hecuba to him, or he to Hecuba,[2]
That he should weep for her? What would he do,
Had he the motive and the cue for passion,[3]
That I have? He would drown the stage with tears,
And cleave the general ear[4] with horrid speech;
Make mad the guilty, and appal the free,
Confound the ignorant; and amaze, indeed,
The very faculties of eyes and ears.
Yet I,
A dull and muddy-mettled rascal, peak,
Like John a-dreams,[5] unpregnant of my cause,[6]

in Shakspeare's time accented on the second syllable. The folio exhibits the passage as I have printed it. *Steevens.*

[2] *What 's Hecuba to him,* &c.] It is plain Shakspeare alludes to a story told of Alexander the cruel tyrant of Pherae in Thessaly, who seeing a famous tragedian act in the *Troades* of Euripides, was so sensibly touched that he left the theatre before the play was ended; being ashamed, as he owned, that he who never pitied those he murdered, should weep at the sufferings of *Hecuba* and Andromache. See Plutarch in the Life of Pelopidas. *Upton.*

Shakspeare, it is highly probable, had read the life of Pelopidas, but I see no ground for supposing there is here an allusion to it. Hamlet is not ashamed of being seen to weep at a theatrical exhibition, but mortified that a player, in *a dream of passion,* should appear more agitated by fictitious sorrow, than the prince was by a real calamity. *Malone.*

[3] —— *the cue for passion,*] The *hint,* the *direction. Johnson.*

This phrase is theatrical, and occurs at least a dozen times in our author's plays. Thus, says Quince to Flute in *A Midsummer-Night's Dream:* "You speak all your part at once, *cues* and all." See also Vol. IX, p. 295, n. 9. *Steevens.*

[4] —— *the general ear* —] The ear of all mankind. So before, —*Caviare to the general,* that is, to the *multitude. Johnson.*

[5] *Like* John a-dreams,] *John a-dreams,* i. e. *of dreams,* means only *John* the *dreamer;* a nick-name, I suppose, for any ignorant silly fellow. Thus the puppet formerly thrown at during the season of Lent, was called *Jack-a-Lent,* and the ignis fatuus *Jack-a-lanthorn.*

At the beginning of Arthur Hall's translation of the second Book of Homer's *Iliad,* 1581, we are told of Jupiter, that—

"*John dreaming* God he callde to him, that God, chiefe God of il,
"Common cole carrier of every lye," &c.

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And can say nothing; no, not for a king,
Upon whose property, and most dear life,
A damn'd defeat was made.[7] Am I a coward?
Who calls me villain? breaks my pate across?
Plucks off my beard, and blows it in my face?
Tweaks me by the nose? gives me the lie i' the throat,
As deep as to the lungs? Who does me this?
Ha!

John-a-droynes however, if not a corruption of this nick-name, seems to have been some well-known character, as I have met with more than one allusion to him. So, in *Have with you to Saffron Walden, or Gabriel Harvey's Hunt is up*, by Nashe, 1596: "The description of that poor *John-a-droynes* his man, whom he had hired," &c. *John-a-Droynes* is likewise a foolish character in Whetstone's *Promos and Cassandra*, 1578, who is seized by informers, has not much to say in his defence, and is cheated out of his money. *Steevens.*

[6] —— unpregnant *of my cause,*] *Unpregnant*, for *having no due sense of. Warburton.*

Rather, *not quickened with a new desire of vengeance; not teeming with revenge. Johnson.*

[7] *A damn'd* defeat *was made.*] *Defeat*, for *destruction. Warburton.*

Rather, *dispossession. Johnson.*

The word *defeat*, (which certainly means *destruction* in the present instance,) is very licentiously used by the old writers. Shakspeare in *Othello* employs it yet more quaintly:—"*Defeat* thy favour with an usurped beard;" and Middleton, in his comedy, called *Any Thing for a quiet Life*, says—"I have heard of your *defeat* made upon a mercer."

Again, in *Revenge for Honour*, by Chapman:

"That he might meantime *make* a sure *defeat*
"On our good aged father's life."

Again, in *The Wits*, by Sir W. D'Avenant, 1637: "Not all the skill I have, can pronounce him free of *the defeat upon* my gold and jewels."

Again, in *The Isle of Gulls*, 1606: "My late shipwreck has made a *defeat* both of my friends and treasure." *Steevens.*

In the passage quoted from *Othello*, to *defeat* is used for *undo* or alter: *defaire*, Fr. See Minsheu in v. Minsheu considers the substantives *defeat* and *defeature* as synonymous. The former he defines *an overthrow*; the latter, *execution or slaughter of men.* In *King Henry V* we have a similar phraseology:

"*Making defeat upon* the powers of France."

And the word is again used in the same sense in the last Act of this play:

"—— Their *defeat*
"Doth by their own insinuation grow." *Malone.*

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Why, I should take it: for it cannot be,
But I am pigeon-liver'd, and lack gall
To make oppression bitter; or, ere this,
I should have fatted all the region kites
With this slave's offal: Bloody, bawdy villain!
Remorseless, treacherous, lecherous, kindless[8] villain!
Why, what an ass am I? This is most brave;[9]
That I, the son of a dear father murder'd,
Prompted to my revenge by heaven and hell,
Must, like a whore, unpack my heart with words,
And fall a cursing, like a very drab,
A scullion![1]
Fy upon 't! foh! About my brains![2] Humph! I have heard,
That guilty creatures, sitting at a play,[3]

8 —— *kindless* —] *Unnatural. Johnson.*

9 *Why, what an ass am I? This is most brave;*] The folio reads:
" O vengeance!
" Who? what an ass am I? Sure this is most brave."
Steevens.

1 A *scullion!*] Thus the folio. The quartos read,—A *stallion. Steevens.*

2 —— *About my brains!*] *Wits, to your work. Brain,* go *about* the present business. *Johnson.*

This expression (which seems a parody on the naval one,—*about ship!*) occurs in the Second Part of the *Iron Age,* by Heywood, 1632:
" *My brain about* again! for thou hast found
" New projects now to work on."
About, my brain! therefore, (as Mr. M. Mason observes) appears to signify, " be my thoughts shifted into a contrary direction." *Steevens.*

3 —————— *I have heard,*
That guilty creatures, sitting at a play,] A number of these stories are collected together by Thomas Heywood, in his *Actor's Vindication. Steevens.*

So, in *A Warning for faire Women,* 1599:
" Ile tell you, sir, one more to quite your tale.
" A woman that had made away her husband,
" And sitting to behold a tragedy
" At Linne a towne in Norfolke,
" Acted by players trauelling that way,
" Wherein a woman that had murtherd hers
" Was euer haunted with her husbands ghost:
" The passion written by a feeling pen,
" And acted by a good tragedian,

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Have by the very cunning of the scene
Been struck so to the soul, that presently
They have proclaim'd their malefactions:
For murder, though it hath no tongue, will speak
With most miraculous organ. I'll have these players
Play something like the murder of my father,
Before mine uncle: I 'll observe his looks;
I 'll tent him[4] to the quick; if he do blench,[5]
I know my course. The spirit, that I have seen,
May be a devil: and the devil hath power
To assume a pleasing shape; yea, and, perhaps,
Out of my weakness, and my melancholy,
(As he is very potent with such spirits)
Abuses me to damn me: I 'll have grounds
More relative than this:[6] The play 's the thing,
Wherein I 'll catch the conscience of the king. [*Exit.*

ACT III.....SCENE I.

A Room in the Castle.

Enter King, Queen, POLONIUS, OPHELIA, ROSENCRANTZ, *and* GUILDENSTERN.

King. And can you, by no drift of conference,[7]
Get from him, why he puts on this confusion;
Grating so harshly all his days of quiet

"She was so mooued with the sight thereof,
"As she cryed out, the play was made by her,
"And openly confest her husbands murder." *Todd.*

[4] —— *tent him* —] Search his wounds. *Johnson.*

[5] —— *if he do* blench,] If he *shrink*, or start. The word is used by Fletcher, in *The Night-Walker:*

"*Blench* at no danger, though it be a gallows."

Again, in Gower, *De Confessione Amantis*, Lib. VI, fol. 128:

"Without *blenchinge* of mine eie."

Chaucer, in his *Knightes Tale*, v. 1080, seems to use the verb —to *blent* in a similar sense:

"And therewithal he *blent* and cried, a!" *Steevens.*

See Vol. VI, p. 188, n. 1. *Malone.*

[6] *More* relative *than this*:] *Relative*, for *convictive*. *Warburton.* *Convictive* is only the consequential sense. *Relative* is *nearly related, closely connected.* *Johnson.*

[7] —— *conference* —] The folio reads—*circumstance*. *Steevens.*

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With turbulent and dangerous lunacy?

Ros. He does confess, he feels himself distracted;
But from what cause he will by no means speak.

Guil. Nor do we find him forward to be sounded;
But, with a crafty madness, keeps aloof,
When we would bring him on to some confession
Of his true state.

Queen. Did he receive you well?

Ros. Most like a gentleman.

Guil. But with much forcing of his disposition.

Ros. Niggard of question; but, of our demands,
Most free in his reply.[3]

Queen. Did you assay him
To any pastime?

Ros. Madam, it so fell out, that certain players
We o'er-raught on the way:[9] of these we told him;
And there did seem in him a kind of joy
To hear of it: They are about the court;

[3] Niggard *of question; but, of our demands,*
Most free *in his reply.*] This is given as the description of the conversation of a man whom the speaker *found not forward to be sounded;* and who *kept aloof* when they would *bring him to confession:* but such a description can never pass but at cross-purposes. Shakspeare certainly wrote it just the other way:

Most free *of question; but, of our demands,*
Niggard *in his reply.*

That this is the true reading, we need but turn back to the preceding scene, for Hamlet's conduct, to be satisfied. *Warburton.*

Warburton forgets that by *question,* Shakspeare does not usually mean *interrogatory,* but *discourse;* yet in which ever sense the word be taken, this account given by Rosencrantz agrees but ill with the scene between him and Hamlet, as actually represented. *M. Mason.*

Slow to begin conversation, but free enough in his answers to our demands. Guildenstern has just said that Hamlet kept aloof when they wished to bring him to confess the cause of his distraction: Rosencrantz therefore here must mean, that *up to that point,* till they touch'd on that, he was free enough in his answers. *Malone.*

[9] —— o'er-raught *on the way:*] *O'er-raught* is *over-reached,* that is, *over-took. Johnson.*

So, in Spenser's *Fairy Queen,* B. VI, c. iii:

" Having by chance a close advantage view'd,
" He *over-raught* him," &c.

Again, in the 5th Book of Gawin Douglas's translation of the *Æneid:*

" War not the samyn mysfortoun me *over-raucht.*" *Steevens.*

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And, as I think, they have already order
This night to play before him.
Pol. 'Tis most true:
And he beseech'd me to entreat your majesties,
To hear and see the matter.
King. With all my heart; and it doth much content me
To hear him so inclin'd.
Good gentlemen, give him a further edge,
And drive his purpose on to these delights.
Ros. We shall, my lord. [*Exeunt* Ros. *and* Guil.
King. Sweet Gertrude, leave us too:
For we have closely sent for Hamlet hither;
That he, as 'twere by accident, may here[1]
Affront Ophelia:[2]
Her father, and myself (lawful espials[3])
Will so bestow ourselves, that, seeing, unseen,
We may of their encounter frankly judge;
And gather by him, as he is behav'd,
If 't be the affliction of his love, or no,
That thus he suffers for.
Queen. I shall obey you:
And, for your part,[4] Ophelia, I do wish,
That your good beauties be the happy cause
Of Hamlet's wildness: so shall I hope, your virtues
Will bring him to his wonted way again,
To both your honours.
Oph. Madam, I wish it may. [*Exit* Queen.

[1] —— *may* here —] The folio, (I suppose by an error of the press) reads—*may* there —. *Steevens.*

[2] Affront *Ophelia:*] To *affront*, is only *to meet directly. Johnson.*
Affrontare, Ital. So, in *The Devil's Charter*, 1607:
" *Affronting* that port where proud Charles should enter."
Again, in Sir W. D'Avenant's *Cruel Brother*, 1630:
" In sufferance *affronts* the winter's rage?" *Steevens.*

[3] —— *espials*] i. e. spies. So, in *King Henry VI*, P. I:
" —— as he march'd along,
" By your *espials* were discovered
" Two mightier troops."
See also Vol. X, p. 30, n. 9.
The words—" lawful espials," are found only in the folio. *Steevens.*

[4] *And, for* your *part,*] Thus the quarto, 1604, and the folio. The modern editors, following a quarto of no authority, read—for *my* part. *Malone.*

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Pol. Ophelia, walk you here:—Gracious, so please you,
We will bestow ourselves:—Read on this book; [*To* Oph.
That show of such an exercise may colour
Your loneliness.[5]—We are oft to blame in this,—
'Tis too much prov'd,[6]—that, with devotion's visage,
And pious action, we do sugar o'er
The devil himself.

King. O, 'tis too true! how smart
A lash that speech doth give my conscience!
The harlot's cheek, beautied with plast'ring art,
Is not more ugly to the thing that helps it,[7]
Than is my deed to my most painted word:
O heavy burden! [*Aside.*

Pol. I hear him coming; let 's withdraw, my lord.
[*Exeunt* King *and* Pol.

Enter Hamlet.

Ham. To be, or not to be,[8] that is the question:—

[5] *Your* loneliness.] Thus the folio. The first and second quartos read—*lowliness*. *Steevens.*

[6] *'Tis too much prov'd,*] It is found by too frequent experience. *Johnson.*

[7] —— *more ugly* to *the thing that helps it,*] That is, *compared with* the thing that helps it. *Johnson.*
So, Ben Jonson:
"All that they did was piety *to* this." *Steevens.*

[8] *To be, or not to be,*] Of this celebrated soliloquy, which bursting from a man distracted with contrariety of desires, and overwhelmed with the magnitude of his own purposes, is connected rather in the speaker's mind, than on his tongue, I shall endeavour to discover the train, and to show how one sentiment produces another.

Hamlet, knowing himself injured in the most enormous and atrocious degree, and seeing no means of redress, but such as must expose him to the extremity of hazard, meditates on his situation in this manner: *Before I can form any rational scheme of action under this pressure of distress,* it is necessary to decide, whether, *after our present state, we are* to be, or not to be. That is the question, which, as it shall be answered, will determine, *whether 'tis nobler,* and more suitable to the dignity of reason, *to suffer the outrages of fortune* patiently, or to take arms against *them,* and by opposing end them, *though perhaps* with the loss of life. If *to die,* were *to sleep, no more, and by a sleep to end* the miseries of our nature, such a sleep were *devoutly to be wished;* but if *to sleep* in death, be *to dream,* to retain our powers of sensibility, we must *pause* to consider, *in that sleep of death what dreams may come.* This consideration *makes calamity* so long endured; *for who would*

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Whether 'tis nobler in the mind, to suffer
The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune;[9]
Or to take arms against a sea of troubles,[1]

bear the vexations of life, which might be ended *by a bare bodkin*, but that he is afraid of something in unknown futurity? This fear it is that gives efficacy to conscience, which, by turning the mind upon *this regard*, chills the ardour of *resolution*, checks the vigour of *enterprize*, and makes the *current* of desire stagnate in inactivity.

We may suppose that he would have applied these general observations to his own case, but that he discovered Ophelia.

Johnson.

Dr. Johnson's explication of the first five lines of this passage is surely wrong. Hamlet is not deliberating whether after our present state we are to exist or not, but whether he should continue to live, or put an end to his life: as is pointed out by the second and the three following lines, which are manifestly a paraphrase on the first: "whether 'tis nobler in the mind to suffer, &c. or to take arms." The question concerning our existence in a future state is not considered till the tenth line:—"To sleep! perchance, to *dream*;" &c. The train of Hamlet's reasoning from the middle of the fifth line, "If to die, were to sleep," &c. Dr. Johnson has marked out with his usual accuracy.

In our poet's *Rape of Lucrece* we find the same question stated, which is proposed in the beginning of the present soliloquy:

"—— with herself she is in mutiny,
"To *live or die, which of the twain were better.*" *Malone.*

9 —— arrows *of outrageous* fortune;] "Homines nos ut esse meminerimus, eâ lege natos, ut omnibus *telis fortunæ* proposita sit vita nostra." Cic. Epist. Fam. v. 16. *Steevens.*

1 *Or to take arms against* a sea *of troubles,*] *A sea of troubles* among the Greeks grew into a proverbial usage; κακῶν θάλασσα, κακῶν τρικυμία. So that the expression figuratively means, the troubles of human life, which flow in upon us, and encompass us round, like a sea. *Theobald.*

Mr. Pope proposed *siege*. I know not why there should be so much solicitude about this metaphor. Shakspeare breaks his metaphors often, and in this desultory speech there was less need of preserving them. *Johnson.*

A similar phrase occurs in Rycharde Morysine's translation of Ludovicus Vives's *Introduction to Wysedome*, 1544: "—how great a *sea* of *euils* euery day ouerunneth" &c.

The change, however, which Mr. Pope would recommend, may be justified from a passage in *Romeo and Juliet*, scene the last:

"You—to remove that *siege of grief* from her—." *Steevens.*

One cannot but wonder that the smallest doubt should be entertained concerning an expression which is so much in Shak-

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And, by opposing, end them?—To die,—to sleep,[2]—
No more;—and, by a sleep, to say we end
The heart-ach, and the thousand natural shocks
That flesh is heir to,—'tis a consummation
Devoutly to be wish'd. To die;—to sleep;—
To sleep! perchance to dream;—ay, there 's the rub;
For in that sleep of death what dreams may come,
When we have shuffled off this mortal coil,[3]
Must give us pause: There 's the respect,[4]
That makes calamity of so long life:

speare's manner; yet, to preserve the integrity of the metaphor, Dr. Warburton reads *assail* of troubles. In the *Prometheus Vinctus* of Æschylus, a similar imagery is found:

" Δυσχείμερον γε πέλαγος ατηρας δυης."
" The stormy *sea* of dire *calamity*."

and in the same play, as an anonymous writer has observed, (*Gent. Magazine*, Aug. 1772,) we have a metaphor no less harsh than that of the text:

" Θολεροι δε λογοι πασσον' εισω
" Στυγνης προς κυμασιν ατης."
" My plaintive *words* in vain confusedly beat
" Against the *waves of hateful misery*."

Shakspeare might have found the very phrase that he has employed, in *The Tragedy of Queen Cordila*, MIRROUR FOR MAGISTRATES, 1575, which undoubtedly he read:

" For lacke of frendes to tell my *seas of* giltlesse *smart*."
Malone.

Menander uses this very expression. *Fragm.* p. 22. Amstel. 12mo. 1719:

" Εις πελαγος αυτον εμβαλεις γαρ πραγματων.
" In *mare molestiarum* te conjicies." *H. White.*

[2] —— *To die,—to sleep,*] This passage is ridiculed in *The Scornful Lady* of Beaumont and Fletcher, as follows:

" —— be deceased, that is, asleep, for so the word is taken. *To sleep, to die; to die, to sleep;* a very figure, sir," &c. &c. *Steevens.*

[3] —— *shuffled off this mortal* coil,] i. e. turmoil, bustle.
Warburton.

A passage resembling this, occurs in a poem entitled *A dolfull Discours of two Strangers, a Lady and a Knight*, published by Churchyard, among his *Chippes*, 1575:

" Yea, *shaking off this sinfull soyle*,
" Me thincke in cloudes I see,
" Among the perfite chosen lambs,
" A place preparde for mee." *Steevens.*

[4] —— *There's the* respect,] i. e. the consideration. See Vol. XII, p. 66, n. 3. *Malone.*

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For who would bear the whips and scorns of time,[5]
The oppressor's wrong, the proud man's contumely,[6]

[5] —— *the whips and scorns* of time,] The evils here complained of are not the product of time or duration simply, but of a corrupted age or manners. We may be sure, then, that Shakspeare wrote:

—— *the whips and scorns* of th' time.

and the description of the evils of a corrupt age, which follows, confirms this emendation. *Warburton.*

It may be remarked, that Hamlet, in his enumeration of miseries, forgets, whether properly or not, that he is a prince, and mentions many evils to which inferior stations only are exposed. *Johnson.*

I think we might venture to read—*the whips and scorns o' the* times, i. e. times satirical as the age of Shakspeare, which probably furnished him with the idea.

In the reigns of Elizabeth and James (particularly in the former) there was more illiberal private abuse and peevish satire published, than in any others I ever knew of, except the present one. I have many of these publications, which were almost all pointed at individuals.

Daniel, in his *Musophilus*, 1599, has the same complaint:

" Do you not see these pamphlets, *libels*, rhimes,
" These strange confused tumults of the mind,
" Are grown to be the sickness *of these times*,
" The great disease inflicted on mankind?"

Whips and *scorns* are surely as inseparable companions, as publick punishment and infamy.

Quips, the word which Dr. Johnson would introduce, is derived, by all etymologists, from *whips*.

Hamlet is introduced as reasoning on a question of general concernment. He therefore takes in all such evils as could befall mankind in general, without considering himself at present as a prince, or wishing to avail himself of the few exemptions which high place might once have claimed.

In *Part of King James I'st. Entertainment passing to his Coronation*, by Ben Jonson and Decker, is the following line, and note on that line:

" *And first account of years, of months*, OF TIME."

" By *time* we understand *the present*." This explanation affords the sense for which I have contended, and without change. *Steevens.*

The word *whips* is used by Marston in his *Satires*, 1599, in the sense required here:

" Ingenuous melancholy,——
" Inthrone thee in my blood; let me entreat,
" Stay his quick jocund skips, and force him run
" A sad-pac'd course, untill my *whips* be done." *Malone.*

[6] —— *the* proud *man's contumely*,] Thus the quarto. The folio

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The pangs of despis'd love,[7] the law's delay,
The insolence of office, and the spurns
That patient merit of the unworthy takes,
When he himself might his quietus make
With a bare bodkin?[8] who would fardels bear,

reads—the *poor* man's contumely; the contumely which the poor man is obliged to endure:

"Nil habet infelix paupertas durius in se,
"Quam quod ridiculos homines facit." *Malone.*

[7] —— *of* despis'd *love,*] The folio reads—of *dispriz'd* love. *Steevens.*

[8] —— *might his* quietus *make*
With a bare bodkin?] The first expression probably alluded to the writ of discharge, which was formerly granted to those barons and knights who personally attended the king on any foreign expedition. This discharge was called a *quietus.*

It is at this time the term for the acquittance which every sheriff receives on settling his accounts at the Exchequer.

The word is used for the discharge of an account, by Webster, in his *Duchess of Malfy,* 1623:

"And 'cause you shall not come to me in debt,
"(Being now my steward) here upon your lips
"I sign your *quietus est.*"

Again:

"You had the trick in audit time to be sick,
"Till I had sign'd your *quietus.*"

A *bodkin* was the ancient term for a *small dagger.* So, in the Second Part of *The Mirrour for Knighthood,* 4to. bl. l. 1598: "— Not having any more weapons but a poor poynado, which usually he did weare about him, and taking it in his hand, delivered these speeches unto it. Thou, silly *bodkin,* shalt finish the piece of worke," &c.

In the margin of Stowe's *Chronicle,* edit. 1614, it is said, that Cæsar was slain with *bodkins:* and in *The Muses' Looking-Glass,* by Randolph, 1638:

"*Apho.* A rapier 's but a *bodkin.*
"*Deil.* And a *bodkin*
"Is a most dang'rous weapon; since I read
"Of Julius Cæsar's death, I durst not venture
"Into a taylor's shop for fear of *bodkins.*"

Again, in *The Custom of the Country,* by Beaumont and Fletcher:

"—— Out with your *bodkin,*
"Your pocket dagger, your stilletto."—

Again, in *Sapho and Phao,* 1591: "—— there will be a desperate fray between two, made at all weapons, from the brown bill to the *bodkin.*"

Again, in Chaucer, as he is quoted at the end of a pamphlet called *The Serpent of Division,* &c. *whereunto is annexed the Tragedy of Gorboduc,* &c. 1591:

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To grunt and sweat[9] under a weary life;
But that the dread of something after death,—
The undiscover'd country, from whose bourn
No traveller returns,[1]—puzzles the will;

" With *bodkins* was Cæsar Julius
" Murdered at Rome of Brutus Crassus." *Steevens.*

By a *bare* bodkin, does not perhaps mean, " by so *little* an instrument as a dagger," but, " *by an unsheathed dagger.*"

In the account which Mr. Steevens has given of the original meaning of the term *quietus*, after the words, " who personally attended the king on any foreign expedition," should have been added,—*and were therefore exempted from the claims of scutage, or a tax on every knight's fee.* *Malone.*

[9] *To* grunt *and sweat* —] Thus the old copies. It is undoubtedly the true reading, but can scarcely be borne by modern ears. *Johnson.*

This word occurs in *The Death of Zoroas*, by Nicholas Grimoald, a translation of a passage in the *Alexandreis* of Philippe Gualtier, into blank verse, printed at the end of *Lord Surrey's Poems:*

" ——— none the charge could give:
" Here *grunts*, here grones, echwhere strong youth is spent."

And Stanyhurst in his translation of Virgil, 1582, for supremum *congemuit* gives us: " —— for sighing it *grunts.*" Again, in Turbervile's translation of Ovid's Epistle from *Canace to Macareus:*

" What might I miser do? greefe forst me *grunt.*"

Again, in the same translator's *Hypermnestra to Lynceus:*

" —— round about I heard
" Of dying men the *grunts.*"

The change made by the editors [to *groan*] is however supported by the following line in *Julius Cæsar*, Act IV, sc. i:

" To *groan* and sweat under the business." *Steevens.*

I apprehend that it is the duty of an editor to exhibit what his author wrote, and not to substitute what may appear to the present age preferable: and Dr. Johnson was of the same opinion. See his note on the word *hugger-mugger*, Act IV, sc. v. I have therefore, though with some reluctance, adhered to the old copies, however unpleasing this word may be to the ear. On the stage, without doubt, an actor is at liberty to substitute a less offensive word. To the ears of our ancestors it probably conveyed no unpleasing sound; for we find it used by Chaucer and others:

" But never *gront* he at no stroke but on,
" Or elles at two, but if his storie lie."
The Monkes Tale, v. 14,627, Tyrwhitt's edit.

Again, in *Wily Beguil'd*, written before 1596:

" She 's never well, but *grunting* in a corner." *Malone.*

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And makes us rather bear those ills we have,

1 *The* undiscover'd *country, from whose bourn*
No traveller *returns,*] This has been cavilled at by Lord Orrery and others, but without reason. The idea of a *traveller* in Shakspeare's time, was of a person who gave an account of his adventures. Every voyage was a *Discovery*. John Taylor has "*A Discovery* by sea from London to Salisbury." *Farmer.*

Again, Marston's *Insatiate Countess*, 1603:

" ——————— wrestled with death,
" From whose stern cave none tracks a backward path."
" Qui nunc it per iter tenebricosum
" Illuc unde negant redire quenquam." *Catullus.*

Again, in Sandford's translation of *Cornelius Agrippa*, &c. 4to. bl. l. 1569, (once a book of uncommon popularity) "The *countrie* of the dead is irremeable, that they *cannot retourne*." Sig: Pp. Again, in *Cymbeline*, says the Gaoler to Posthumus: "How you shall speed in your journey's end [after execution] I think you 'll *never return to tell one*." *Steevens.*

This passage has been objected to by others on a ground which, at the first view of it, seems more plausible. Hamlet himself, it is objected, has had ocular demonstration that travellers do sometimes return from this strange country.

I formerly thought this an inconsistency. But this objection is also founded on a mistake. Our poet without doubt in the passage before us intended to say, that from the *unknown* regions of the dead no traveller returns with all his *corporeal powers;* such as he who goes on a voyage of *discovery* brings back, when he returns to the port from which he sailed. The traveller whom Hamlet had seen, though he appeared in the same habit which he had worn in his life time, was nothing but a shadow; "invulnerable as the air," and consequently *incorporeal.*

If, says the objector, the traveller has once reached this coast, it is not an undiscovered country. But by *undiscovered* Shakspeare meant not undiscovered by departed spirits, but, undiscovered, or unknown to "such fellows as us, who crawl beneath earth and heaven;" *superis incognita tellus.* In this sense every country, of which the traveller does not return *alive* to give *an account*, may be said to be *undiscovered.* The Ghost has given us no account of the region from whence he came, being, as he himself informed us, "forbid to tell the secrets of his prison-house."

Marlowe, before our poet, had compared death to a journey to an undiscovered country:

" ——————— weep not for Mortimer,
" That scorns the world, and, as a *traveller*,
" Goes to *discover countries* yet unknown."
King Edward II, 1598 (written before 1593). *Malone.*

Perhaps this is another instance of Shakspeare's acquaintance with the Bible: "Afore I goe thither, from *whence I shall not turne againe*, even to the lande of darknesse and shadowe of death;

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Than fly to others that we know not of?
Thus conscience does make cowards of us all;
And thus the native hue of resolution
Is sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought;
And enterprizes of great pith,[2] and moment,
With this regard, their currents turn awry,[3]
And lose the name of action.—Soft you, now!
The fair Ophelia:—Nymph, in thy orisons
Be all my sins remember'd.[4]

Oph. Good my lord,
How does your honour for this many a day?

Ham. I humbly thank you; well.

Oph. My lord, I have remembrances of yours,
That I have longed long to re-deliver;
I pray you, now receive them.

Ham. No, not I;
I never gave you aught.

Oph. My honour'd lord, you know right well, you did;
And, with them, words of so sweet breath compos'd
As made the things more rich: their perfume lost,
Take these again; for to the noble mind,
Rich gifts wax poor, when givers prove unkind.
There, my lord.

Ham. Ha, ha! are you honest?

Oph. My lord?

yea into that darke cloudie lande and deadlye shadowe whereas is no order, but terrible feare as in the darknesse." *Job*, ch. x.

" The way that I must goe is at hande, but *whence* I shall *not turne againe*." *Ibid.* ch. xvi.

I quote Cranmer's Bible. *Douce.*

[2] —— *great* pith —] Thus the folio. The quartos read,—of great *pitch*. *Steevens.*

Pitch seems to be the better reading. The allusion is to the *pitching* or throwing the *bar*;—a manly exercise, usual in country villages. *Ritson.*

[3] —— *turn* awry,] Thus the quartos. The folio—turn *away*. The same printer's error occurs in the old copy of *Antony and Cleopatra*, where we find—" Your crown 's *away*," instead of—" Your crown's *awry*." *Steevens.*

[4] —— *Nymph, in thy orisons* &c.] This is a touch of nature. Hamlet, at the sight of Ophelia, does not immediately recollect, that he is to personate madness, but makes her an address grave and solemn, such as the foregoing meditation excited in his thoughts. *Johnson.*

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Ham. Are you fair?

Oph. What means your lordship?

Ham. That if you be honest, and fair, you should admit no discourse to your beauty.[5]

Oph. Could beauty, my lord, have better commerce than with honesty?

Ham. Ay, truly; for the power of beauty will sooner transform honesty from what it is to a bawd, than the force of honesty can translate beauty into his likeness:[6] this was some time a paradox, but now the time gives it proof. I did love you once.

Oph. Indeed, my lord, you made me believe so.

Ham. You should not have believed me: for virtue cannot so inoculate[7] our old stock, but we shall relish of it: I loved you not.

Oph. I was the more deceived.

Ham. Get thee to a nunnery; Why would'st thou be a breeder of sinners? I am myself indifferent honest; but

[5] *That if you be honest, and fair, you should admit no discourse to your beauty.*] This is the reading of all the modern editions, and is copied from the quarto. The folio reads—*your honesty* should admit no discourse to your beauty. The true reading seems to be this,—*if you be honest and fair, you should admit* your honesty *to no discourse with your beauty.* This is the sense evidently required by the process of the conversation. *Johnson.*

That if you be honest and fair, you should admit no discourse to your beauty.] The reply of Ophelia proves beyond doubt, that this reading is wrong.

The reading of the folio appears to be the right one, and requires no amendment.—"Your honesty should admit no discourse to your beauty," means,—"Your honesty should not admit your beauty to any discourse with her;" which is the very sense that Johnson contends for, and expressed with sufficient clearness. *M. Mason.*

"—— rara est concordia formæ
"Atque pudicitiæ." *Ovid. Steevens.*

[6] —— *into* his *likeness:*] The modern editors read—*its* likeness; but the text is right. Shakspeare and his contemporaries frequently use the personal for the neutral pronoun. So Spenser, *Fairy Queen*, Book III, c. ix:

"Then forth *it* break; and with *his* furious blast,
"Confounds both land and seas, and skies doth overcast."

See p. 51, n. 1. *Malone.*

[7] —— *inoculate* —] This is the reading of the first folio. The first quarto reads *euocutat*, the second *euacuat:* and the third, *evacuate. Steevens.*

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yet I could accuse me of such things, that it were better, my mother had not borne me:[8] I am very proud, revengeful, ambitious; with more offences at my beck, than I have thoughts to put them in,[9] imagination to give them shape, or time to act them in: What would such fellows as I do crawling between earth and heaven? We are arrant knaves, all; believe none of us: Go thy ways to a nunnery. Where 's your father?

Oph. At home, my lord.

Ham. Let the doors be shut upon him; that he may play the fool no where but in 's own house. Farewel.

Oph. O, help him, you sweet heavens!

Ham. If thou dost marry, I 'll give thee this plague for thy dowry; Be thou as chaste as ice, as pure as snow, thou shalt not escape calumny. Get thee to a nunnery; farewel: Or, if thou wilt needs marry, marry a fool; for wise men know well enough, what monsters you make of them. To a nunnery, go; and quickly too. Farewel.

Oph. Heavenly powers, restore him!

Ham. I have heard of your paintings too, well enough;[1] God hath given you one face, and you make yourselves

[8] —— *I could accuse me of such things, that it were better, my mother had not borne me:*] So, in our poet's 88th Sonnet:

" —— I can set down a story
" Of faults conceal'd, wherein I am attainted." *Malone.*

[9] —— *with more offences at my beck, than I have thoughts* to put them in,] *To put a thing into thought,* is *to think on it.* *Johnson.*

—— *at my beck,*] That is, *always ready to come about me.* *Steevens.*

[1] *I have heard of your* paintings *too, well enough;* &c.] This is according to the quarto; the folio, for *painting*, has *prattlings*, and for *face*, has *pace*, which agrees with what follows, *you jig, you amble.* Probably the author wrote both. I think the common reading best. *Johnson.*

I would continue to read *paintings*, because these destructive aids of beauty seem, in the time of Shakspeare, to have been general objects of satire. So, in Drayton's *Mooncalf:*

" —— No sooner got the teens,
" But her own natural beauty she disdains;
" With oyls and broths most venemous and base
" She plaisters over her well-favour'd face;
" And those sweet veins by nature rightly plac'd
" Wherewith she seems that white skin to have lac'd,
" She soon doth alter; and, with fading blue,
" Blanching her bosom, she makes others new." *Steevens.*

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another:[2] you jig, you amble, and you lisp, and nick-name God's creatures, and make your wantonness your ignorance:[3] Go to; I 'll no more of 't; it hath made me mad. I say, we will have no more marriages: those that are married already, all but one, shall live;[4] The rest shall keep as they are. To a nunnery, go. [*Exit* HAM.

Oph. O, what a noble mind is here o'erthrown!
The courtier's, soldier's, scholar's, eye, tongue, sword:[5]
The expectancy and rose of the fair state,
The glass of fashion,[6] and the mould of form,[7]
The observ'd of all observers! quite, quite down!
And I, of ladies most deject[8] and wretched,
That suck'd the honey of his musick vows,
Now see that noble and most sovereign reason,
Like sweet bells jangled, out of tune[9] and harsh;

[2] —— *God hath given you one face, and you make yourselves another:*] In *Guzman de Alfarache*, 1623, p. 13, we have an invective against painting in which is a similar passage: "O filthinesse, above all filthinesse! O affront, above all other affronts! *that God hath given thee one face, thou shouldst abuse his image and make thyselfe another.*" *Reed.*

[3] —— *make your wantonness your ignorance:*] You mistake by *wanton* affectation, and pretend to mistake by *ignorance*. *Johnson.*

[4] —— *all but one, shall live;*] By the one who shall not live, he means his step-father. *Malone.*

[5] *The courtier's, soldier's, scholar's, eye, tongue, sword:*] The poet certainly meant to have placed his words thus:

The courtier's, scholar's, soldier's, eye, tongue, sword;

otherwise the excellence of *tongue* is appropriated to the *soldier*, and the *scholar* wears the *sword*. *Warner.*

This regulation is needless. So, in *Tarquin and Lucrece:*

"Princes are the *glass*, the *school*, the *book*,
"Where subjects eyes do *learn*, do *read*, do *look*."

And in *Quintilian:* "Multum agit sexus, ætas conditio; ut in *fœminis*, *senibus*, *pupillis*, *liberos*, *parentes*, *conjuges*, alligantibus." *Farmer.*

[6] *The glass of fashion,*] "Speculum consuetudinis." *Cicero.* *Steevens.*

[7] —— *The mould of form,*] The model by whom all endeavoured to form themselves. *Johnson.*

[8] —— *most* deject —] So, in Heywood's *Silver Age*, 1613:

"—— What knight is that
"So passionately *deject?*" *Steevens.*

[9] —— *out of* tune —] Thus the folio. The quarto—out of *time*. *Steevens.*

These two words in the hand-writing of Shakspeare's age are

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That unmatch'd form and feature[1] of blown youth,
Blasted with ecstacy:[2] O, woe is me!
To have seen what I have seen, see what I see!

Re-enter King *and* POLONIUS.

King. Love! his affections do not that way tend;
Nor what he spake, though it lack'd form a little,
Was not like madness. There 's something in his soul,
O'er which his melancholy sits on brood;
And, I do doubt, the hatch, and the disclose,[3]
Will be some danger: Which for to prevent,
I have, in quick determination,
Thus set it down; He shall with speed to England,
For the demand of our neglected tribute:
Haply, the seas, and countries different,
With variable objects, shall expel
This something-settled matter in his heart;
Whereon his brains still beating, puts him thus
From fashion of himself. What think you on 't?

Pol. It shall do well: But yet I do believe,
The origin and commencement of his grief
Sprung from neglected love.—How now, Ophelia?
You need not tell us what lord Hamlet said;
We heard it all.—My lord, do as you please;
But, if you hold it fit, after the play,

almost indistinguishable, and hence are frequently confounded in the old copies. *Malone.*

[1] —— *and* feature —] Thus the folio. The quartos read—*stature. Steevens.*

[2] —— *with* ecstacy:] The word *ecstacy* was anciently used to signify some degree of alienation of mind.

So, Gawin Douglas translating—*stetit acri fixa dolore:*

" In *ecstacy* she stood, and mad almaist."

See Vol. II, p. 97, n. 5; and Vol. VII, p. 135, n. 6. *Steevens.*

[3] —— *the* disclose,] This was the technical term. So, in *The Maid of Honour*, by Massinger:

" One aierie with proportion ne'er *discloses*
" The eagle and the wren." *Malone.*

Disclose, (says Randle Holme, in his *Academy of Armory and Blazon*, Book II, ch. ii, p. 238,) is when the young just peeps through the shell. It is also taken for laying, *hatching*, or bringing forth young: as she *disclosed* three birds."

Again, in the fifth Act of the play now before us:

" Ere that her golden couplets are *disclos'd.*"

See my note on this passage. *Steevens.*

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Let his queen mother all alone entreat him
To show his grief; let her be round with him;[4]
And I 'll be plac'd, so please you, in the ear
Of all their conference: If she find him not,
To England send him; or confine him, where
Your wisdom best shall think.

King. It shall be so:
Madness in great ones must not unwatch'd go. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

A Hall in the same.

Enter HAMLET, *and certain* Players.

Ham. Speak the speech, I pray you, as I pronounced it to you, trippingly on the tongue: but if you mouth it, as many of our players do, I had as lief the town-crier spoke my lines. Nor do not saw the air too much with your hand, thus; but use all gentle: for in the very torrent, tempest, and (as I may say) whirlwind of your passion, you must acquire and beget a temperance, that may give it smoothness. O, it offends me to the soul, to hear a robustious perriwig-pated[5] fellow tear a passion to tatters, to very rags, to split the ears of the groundlings;[6]

[4] —— *be* round *with him;*] To be *round* with a person, is to reprimand him with freedom. So, in *A Mad World, my Masters*, by Middleton, 1608: "She 's *round* with her i' faith." *Malone.*
See *Comedy of Errors*, Vol. VI, p. 344, n. 1. *Steevens.*

[5] —— perriwig-*pated* —] This is a ridicule on the quantity of false hair worn in Shakspeare's time, for wigs were not in common use till the reign of Charles II. In *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, Julia says—"I 'll get me such a colour'd *periwig*."
Goff, who wrote several plays in the reign of James I, and was no mean scholar, has the following lines in his Tragedy of *The Courageous Turk*, 1632:

"—— How now, you heavens;
"Grow you so proud you must needs put on curl'd locks,
"And clothe yourselves in *perriwigs* of fire?"

Players, however, seem to have worn them most generally. So, in *Every Woman in her Humour*, 1609: "— as none wear hoods but monks and ladies; and feathers but fore-horses, &c.— none *perriwigs* but *players* and pictures." *Steevens.*

[6] —— *the groundlings;*] The meaner people then seem to have sat below, as they now sit in the upper gallery, who, not well understanding poetical language, were sometimes gratified by a

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who, for the most part, are capable of nothing but inexplicable dumb shows, and noise:[7] I would have such a fel-

mimical and mute representation of the drama, previous to the dialogue. *Johnson.*

Before each act of the tragedy of *Jocasta*, translated from Euripides, by George Gascoigne and Francis Kinwelmersh, the order of these dumb shows is very minutely described. This play was presented at Gray's-Inn by them, in 1566. The mute exhibitions included in it are chiefly emblematical, nor do they display a picture of one single scene which is afterwards performed on the stage. In some other pieces I have observed, that they serve to introduce such circumstances as the limits of a play would not admit to be represented.

Thus, in *Herod and Antipater*, 1622:

" ——— Let me now
" Intreat your worthy patience to contain
" Much in imagination; and, what words
" Cannot have time to utter, let your eyes
" Out of this DUMB SHOW tell your memories."

In short, dumb shows sometimes supplied deficiencies, and, at others, filled up the space of time which was necessary to pass while business was supposed to be transacted in foreign parts. With this method of preserving one of the unities, our ancestors appear to have been satisfied.

Ben Jonson mentions the *groundlings* with equal contempt: " The understanding gentlemen of the *ground* here."

Again, in *The Case is Alter'd*, 1609: " — a rude barbarous crew that have no brains, and yet *grounded* judgements; they will hiss any thing that mounts above their *grounded* capacities."

Again, in *Lady Alimony*, 1659: " Be your stage-curtains artificially drawn, and so covertly shrowded that the squint-eyed *groundling* may not peep in?"

In our early play-houses the pit had neither floor nor benches. Hence the term of *groundlings* for those who frequented it.

The *groundling*, in its primitive signification, means a fish which always keeps at the bottom of the water. *Steevens.*

[7] —— *who, for the most part, are* capable *of nothing but inexplicable dumb shows, and noise:*] i. e. have a *capacity* for nothing but dumb shows; *understand* nothing else. So, in Heywood's *History of Women*, 1624: " I have therein imitated our *historical* and comical poets, that write to the stage; who, lest the auditory should be dulled with serious discourses, in every act present some zany, with his mimick gesture, to breed in the less *capable* mirth and laughter." See Vol. XI, p. 89, n. 2. *Malone.*

—— *inexplicable dumb shows,*] I believe the meaning is, *shows, without words to explain them. Johnson.*

Rather, I believe, shows which are too confusedly conducted to explain themselves.

I meet with one of these in Heywood's play of *The Four Prentices of London*, 1615, where the *Presenter* says:

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low whipp'd for o'er-doing Termagant;[8] it out-herods Herod:[9] Pray you, avoid it.

" I must entreat your patience to forbear
" While we do feast your eye and starve your ear.
" For in *dumb shews*, which, were they writ at large,
" Would ask a long and tedious circumstance,
" Their infant fortunes I will soon express :" &c.

Then follow the *dumb shows*, which well deserve the character Hamlet has already given of this species of entertainment, as may be seen from the following passage: "Enter Tancred, with Bella Franca richly attired, she *somewhat affecting him*, though she *makes no show of it*." Surely this may be called an *inexplicable dumb show*. *Steevens.*

[8] —— *Termagant;*] *Termagaunt* (says Dr. Percy) is the name given in the old romances to the god of the *Sarazens;* in which he is constantly linked with *Mahound*, or *Mohammed*. Thus, in the legend of Syr Guy, the Soudan swears:

" So helpe *Mahowne* of might,
" And *Termagaunt* my God so bright."

So also, in Hall's first satire:

" Nor fright the reader with the Pagan vaunt
" Of mightie *Mahound*, and greate *Termagaunt*."

Termagant is also mentioned by Spenser in his *Fairy Queen*, and by Chaucer in *The Tale of Sir Topas;* and by Beaumont and Fletcher, in *King or no King*, as follows: " This would make a saint swear like a soldier, and a soldier like *Termagant*."

Again, in *The Picture*, by Massinger:

" —— a hundred thousand Turks
" Assail'd him, every one a *Termagaunt*." *Steevens.*

[9] —— *out-herods* Herod:] The character of *Herod* in the ancient mysteries, was always a violent one.

See the *Coventriæ Ludus* among the Cotton MSS. Vespasian D. VIII:

" Now I regne lyk a kyng arrayd ful rych,
" Rollyd in rynggs and robys of array,
" Dukys with dentys I drive into the dych;
" My dedys be full dowty demyd be day."

Chaucer, describing a parish clerk, in his *Miller's Tale*, says:

" He plaieth *Herode* on a skaffold high."

The parish clerks and other subordinate ecclesiasticks appear to have been our first actors, and to have represented their characters on distinct pulpits or *scaffolds*. Thus, in one of the stage-directions to the 27th pageant in the Coventry collection already mentioned: " What tyme that processyon is entered into yᵗ place, and the Herowdys taken his *schaffalde*, and Annas and Cayphas their *schaffaldys*," &c. *Steevens.*

To the instances given by Mr. Steevens of Herod's lofty language, may be added these lines from the Coventry plays among the Cotton MSS. p. 92:

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1 *Play.* I warrant your honour.

Ham. Be not too tame neither, but let your own discretion be your tutor: suit the action to the word, the word to the action; with this special observance, that you o'er-step not the modesty of nature: for any thing so overdone is from the purpose of playing, whose end, both at the first, and now, was, and is, to hold, as 'twere, the mirrour up to nature; to show virtue her own feature, scorn her own image, and the very age and body of the time,[1] his form and pressure.[2] Now this, overdone, or come tardy off, though it make the unskilful laugh, cannot but make the judicious grieve; the censure of which one,[3] must, in your allowance,[4] o'er-weigh a whole theatre

" Of bewte and of boldnes I ber evermore the belle,
" Of mayn and of myght I master every man;
" I dynge with my dowtiness the devyl down to helle,
" For bothe of hevyn and of earth I am kynge certayn."
Malone.

Again, in *The Unluckie Firmentie*, by G. Kyttes, 4to. bl. l:

" But he was in such a rage
" As one that shulde on a stage
" The part of *Herode* playe." *Ritson.*

[1] —— age *and* body *of the* time,] The *age* of the *time* can hardly pass. May we not read, the *face* and *body*, or did the author write the *page?* The *page* suits well with *form* and *pressure*, but ill with *body*. *Johnson.*

To exhibit the *form and pressure* of the *age* of the *time*, is, to represent the manners of the time suitable to the period that is treated of, according as it may be ancient, or modern. *Steevens.*

I can neither think this passage right as it stands, or approve of either of the amendments suggested by Johnson.—There is one more simple than either, that will remove every difficulty: Instead of " *the very* age and body of the time," (from which it is hard to extract any meaning) I read—" *every* age and body of the time;" and then the sense will be this:—" Show virtue her own likeness, and every stage of life, every profession or body of men, its form and resemblance." By *every age*, is meant, the *different stages of life*;—by *every body*, the *various* fraternities, sorts, and ranks of mankind. *M. Mason.*

Perhaps Shakspeare did not mean to connect these words. It is the end of playing, says Hamlet, to show the age in which we live, and the body of the time, its form and pressure: to delineate exactly the manners of the age, and the particular humour of the day. *Malone.*

[2] —— *pressure.*] Resemblance, as in a *print*. *Johnson.*

[3] —— *the censure of which one,*] Ben Jonson seems to have imitated this passage in his *Poetaster*, 1601:

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of others. O, there be players,[5] that I have seen play,—and heard others praise, and that highly,—not to speak it profanely,[6] that, neither having the accent of christians,

" ———— I will try
" If tragedy have a more kind aspect;
" Her favours in my next I will pursue;
" Where if I prove the *pleasure but of one,*
" *If he judicious be, he shall be alone*
" *A theatre unto me.*" *Malone.*

—— *the censure of which one,*] The meaning is, " the censure of *one of* which," and probably that should be the reading also. The present reading, though intelligible, is very licentious, especially in prose. *M. Mason.*

[4] —— *in your* allowance,] In your approbation. See Vol. XIV, *King Lear*, Act II, sc. iv. *Malone.*

[5] *O, there be players,* &c.] I would read thus: " There be players, that I have seen play, and heard others praise, and that highly (not to speak profanely) that neither have the accent nor the gait of Christian, Pagan, nor *Musulman*, have so strutted and bellowed, that I thought some of nature's journeymen had made *the men*, and not made them well," &c. *Farmer.*

I have no doubt that our author wrote,—" that I thought some of nature's journeymen had made *them*, and not made them well," &c. *Them* and *men* are frequently confounded in the old copies. See *The Comedy of Errors*, Act II, sc. ii, folio, 1623: " — because it is a blessing that he bestows on beasts, and what he hath scanted *them* [r. *men*] in hair, he hath given them in wit."—In the present instance the compositor probably caught the word *men* from the last syllable of *journey*men. Shakspeare could not mean to assert as a general truth, that nature's journeymen had made *men*, i. e. all mankind; for, if that were the case, these strutting players would have been on a footing with the rest of the species. Nature herself, the poet means to say, made all mankind except these strutting players, and they were made by Nature's *journeymen.*

A passage in *King Lear*, in which we meet with the same sentiment, in my opinion fully supports the emendation now proposed:

" *Kent.* *Nature* disclaims in THEE, a *tailor made* THEE.
" *Corn.* Thou art a strange fellow: A tailor make a man!
" *Kent.* Ay, a tailor, sir; a stone-cutter or a painter [*Nature's journeymen*] could not have made *him* so ill, though he had been but two hours at the trade."

This notion of Nature keeping a shop, and employing journeymen to form mankind, was common in Shakspeare's time. See Lyly's *Woman in the Moon*, a comedy, 1597: " They draw the curtains from before *Nature's shop*, where stands an image clad, and some unclad." *Malone.*

[6] —— *not to speak it* profanely,] *Profanely* seems to relate, not

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nor the gait of christian, pagan, nor man, have so strutted, and bellowed, that I have thought some of nature's journeymen had made men, and not made them well, they imitated humanity so abominably.

1 *Play.* I hope, we have reformed that indifferently with us.

Ham. O, reform it altogether. And let those, that play your clowns, speak no more than is set down for them:[7] for there be of them, that will themselves laugh, to set on some quantity of barren spectators to laugh too; though, in the mean time, some necessary question of the play be then to be considered: that 's villainous; and shows a most

to the praise which he has mentioned, but to the censure which he is about to utter. Any gross or indelicate language was called *profane*. *Johnson.*

So, in *Othello*:—" he is a most *profane* and liberal counsellor." *Malone.*

[7] —— *speak no more than is set down for them:*] So, in *The Antipodes*, by Brome, 1638:

" —— you, sir, are incorrigible, and
" Take licence to yourself to add unto
" Your parts, your own free fancy," &c.
" —— That is a way, my lord, has been allow'd
" On elder stages, to move mirth and laughter."
" —— Yes, in the days of *Tarlton* and of *Kempe*,
" Before the stage was purg'd from barbarism," &c.

Stowe informs us, (p. 697, edit. 1615,) that among the twelve players who were sworn the queen's servants in 1583, " were two rare men, viz. Thomas Wilson, for a quick delicate refined *extemporall witte*; and Richard Tarleton, for a wondrous plentifull, pleasant *extemporall wit*," &c.

Again, in *Tarleton's Newes from Purgatory*: " —I absented myself from all plaies, as wanting that merrye Roscius of plaiers that famosed all comedies so with his pleasant and *extemporall invention*."

This cause for complaint, however, against low comedians, is still more ancient; for in *The Contention betwyxte Churchyard and Camell*, &c. 1560, I find the following passage:

" But Vices in stage plaies,
" When theyr matter is gon,
" They laugh out the reste
" To the lookers on.
" And so wantinge matter,
" You brynge in my coate," &c. *Steevens.*

The clown very often addressed the audience, in the middle of the play, and entered into a contest of raillery and sarcasm with such of the audience as chose to engage with him. It is to this absurd practice that Shakspeare alludes. *Malone*

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pitiful ambition in the fool that uses it. Go, make you ready.— [*Exeunt* Players.

Enter POLONIUS, ROSENCRANTZ, *and* GUILDENSTERN.

How now, my lord? will the king hear this piece of work?

Pol. And the queen too, and that presently.

Ham. Bid the players make haste.— [*Exit* POL.

Will you two help to hasten them?

Both. Ay, my lord. [*Exeunt* ROS. *and* GUIL.

Ham. What, ho; Horatio!

Enter HORATIO.

Hor. Here, sweet lord, at your service.

Ham. Horatio, thou art e'en as just a man
As e'er my conversation cop'd withal.

Hor. O, my dear lord, ——

Ham. Nay, do not think I flatter:
For what advancement may I hope from thee,
That no revenue hast, but thy good spirits,
To feed, and clothe thee? Why should the poor be flatter'd?
No, let the candied tongue lick absurd pomp;
And crook the pregnant hinges of the knee,[8]
Where thrift may follow fawning. Dost thou hear?
Since my dear soul[9] was mistress of her choice,
And could of men distinguish her election,
She hath seal'd thee for herself:[1] for thou hast been
As one, in suffering all, that suffers nothing;
A man, that fortune's buffets and rewards
Hast ta'en with equal thanks: and bless'd are those,

[8] —— *the* pregnant *hinges of the knee,*] I believe the sense of *pregnant* in this place is, *quick, ready, prompt. Johnson.*
See Vol. III, p. 453, n. 7. *Steevens.*

[9] —— *my* dear *soul* —] Perhaps—my *clear* soul. *Johnson.*
Dear soul is an expression equivalent to the φίλα γυναῖα, φίλον ἦτορ, of Homer. *Steevens.*

[1] *And could of men distinguish her election,*
She *hath seal'd thee for herself:*] Thus the quarto. The folio thus:

And could of men distinguish, her election
Hath *seal'd thee* &c. *Steevens.*

Mr. Ritson prefers the reading of the quarto, and observes, that to *distinguish her election,* is no more than to *make her election. Distinguish of men,* he adds, is exceeding harsh, to say the best of it. *Reed.*

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Whose blood and judgment[2] are so well co-mingled,[3]
That they are not a pipe for fortune's finger
To sound what stop she please: Give me that man
That is not passion's slave, and I will wear him
In my heart's core,[4] ay, in my heart of heart,
As I do thee.—Something too much of this.—
There is a play to-night before the king;
One scene of it comes near the circumstance,
Which I have told thee of my father's death.
I pr'ythee, when thou seest that act a-foot,
Even with the very comment of thy soul
Observe my uncle: if his occulted guilt
Do not itself unkennel in one speech,
It is a damned ghost that we have seen;
And my imaginations are as foul
As Vulcan's stithy.[5] Give him heedful note:
For I mine eyes will rivet to his face;
And, after, we will both our judgments join
In censure of his seeming.

Hor. Well, my lord:
If he steal aught, the whilst this play is playing,
And scape detecting, I will pay the theft.

Ham. They are coming to the play; I must be idle:
Get you a place.

Danish March. A Flourish. Enter King, Queen, POLONIUS, OPHELIA, ROSENCRANTZ, GUILDENSTERN, *and Others.*

[2] *Whose blood and judgment* —] According to the doctrine of the four humours, *desire* and *confidence* were seated in the blood, and *judgment* in the phlegm, and the due mixture of the humours made a perfect character. *Johnson.*

[3] —— *co-mingled,*] Thus the folio. The quarto reads—*co-medled;* which had formerly the same meaning. *Malone.*

[4] —— *my heart's* core,] This expression occurs also in Chapman's translation of the sixth *Iliad:*

" —— he wandred evermore
" Alone through his Aleian field; and fed upon the *core*
" Of his sad bosome." *Steevens.*

[5] —— *Vulcan's* stithy.] *Stithy* is a smith's anvil. *Johnson.*
So, in *Troilus and Cressida:*

" Now by the *forge* that *stithied* Mars's helm."

The *stith* is the *anvil*, the *stithy*, the *smith's shop*. These words are familiar to me, being in constant use at Halifax, my native place. *J. Edwards.*

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King. How fares our cousin Hamlet?

Ham. Excellent, i' faith; of the camelion's dish; I eat the air, promise-crammed: You cannot feed capons so.

King. I have nothing with this answer, Hamlet; these words are not mine.

Ham. No, nor mine now.[6] My lord,—you played once in the university, you say?[7] [*To* POL.

[6] —— *nor mine now.*] A man's words, says the proverb, are his own no longer than he keeps them unspoken. *Johnson.*

[7] —— *you played once in the university, you say?*] It should seem from the following passage in Vice Chancellor Hatcher's Letters to Lord Burghley, on June 21, 1580, that the common players were likewise occasionally admitted to perform there: "Whereas it has pleased your honour to recommend my lorde of Oxenford his players, that they might show their cunning in several plays already practised by 'em before the Queen's majesty"—— (denied on account of the pestilence and commencement:) "of late we denied the like to the Right Honourable the Lord of Leicester his servants." *Farmer.*

The practice of acting Latin plays in the universities of Oxford and Cambridge, is very ancient, and continued to near the middle of the last century. They were performed occasionally for the entertainment of princes and other great personages; and regularly at Christmas, at which time a *Lord of misrule* was appointed at Oxford, to regulate the exhibitions, and a similar officer with the title of *Imperator* at Cambridge. The most celebrated actors at Cambridge were the students of St. John's and King's colleges: at Oxford those of Christ-Church. In the hall of that college a Latin comedy called *Marcus Geminus*, and the Latin tragedy of *Progne*, were performed before Queen Elizabeth in the year 1566; and in 1564, the Latin tragedy of *Dido* was played before her majesty, when she visited the university of Cambridge. The exhibition was in the body or nave of the chapel of King's college, which was lighted by the royal guards, each of whom bore a staff-torch in his hand. See Peck's *Desider. Cur.* p. 36, n. x. The actors of this piece were all of that college. The author of the tragedy, who in the Latin account of this royal visit, in the Museum, [MSS. Baker, 7037, p. 203,] is said to have been *Regalis Collegii olim socius*, was, I believe, John Rightwise, who was elected a fellow of King's college, in 1507, and according to Anthony Wood, "made the tragedy of *Dido* out of Virgil, and acted the same with the scholars of his school [St. Paul's, of which he was appointed master in 1522,] before Cardinal Wolsey with great applause." In 1583, the same play was performed at Oxford, in Christ-Church hall, before Albertus de Alasco, a Polish prince Palatine, as was William Gager's Latin comedy, entitled *Rivales*. On Elizabeth's second visit to Oxford, in 1592, a few years before the writing of the present play, she was entertained on the 24th and 26th of September,

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Pol. That did I, my lord; and was accounted a good actor.

Ham. And what did you enact?

Pol. I did enact Julius Cæsar:[8] I was killed i' the Capitol;[9] Brutus killed me.

Ham. It was a brute part of him,[1] to kill so capital a calf there.—Be the players ready?

Ros. Ay, my lord; they stay upon your patience.[2]

Queen. Come hither, my dear Hamlet, sit by me.

Ham. No, good mother, here 's metal more attractive.

Pol. O ho! do you mark that? [*To the* King.

Ham. Lady, shall I lie in your lap?

[*Lying down at* OPHELIA'S *Feet.*[3]

with the representation of the last-mentioned play, and another Latin comedy, called *Bellum Grammaticale*. *Malone.*

[8] *I did enact* Julius Cæsar:] A Latin play on the subject of Cæsar's death was performed at Christ-Church in Oxford, in 1582; and several years before, a Latin play on the same subject, written by Jacques Grevin, was acted in the college of Beauvais, at Paris. I suspect that there was likewise an English play on the story of Cæsar before the time of Shakspeare. See Vol. XIV, p. 2. *Malone.*

[9] —— *I was killed i' the Capitol;*] This, it is well known, was not the case; for Cæsar, we are expressly told by Plutarch, was killed in *Pompey's portico*. But our poet followed the received opinion, and probably the representation of his own time, in a play on the subject of Cæsar's death, previous to that which he wrote. The notion that Julius Cæsar was killed in the Capitol is as old as the time of Chaucer:

" This Julius to the *capitolie* wente
" Upon a day as he was wont to gon,
" And in the *capitolie* anon him hente
" This false Brutus, and his other soon,
" And sticked him with bodekins anon
" With many a wound," &c. *The Monkes Tale.*
Tyrwhitt's edit. Vol. II, p. 31. *Malone.*

[1] *It was a* brute part *of him,*] Sir John Harrington in his *Metamorphosis of Ajax*, 1596, has the same quibble: " O brave-minded *Brutus!* but this I must truly say, they were two *brutish parts* both of him and you; one to kill his sons for treason, the other to kill his father in treason." *Steevens.*

[2] —— *they stay upon your* patience.] May it not be read more intelligibly,—*they stay upon your* pleasure? In *Macbeth* it is:
" Noble Macbeth, we stay upon your *leisure.*" *Johnson.*

[3] —— *at* Ophelia's *feet.*] To lie at the feet of a mistress during any dramatick representation, seems to have been a common act

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Oph. No, my lord.
Ham. I mean, my head upon your lap?[4]
Oph. Ay, my lord.
Ham. Do you think, I meant country matters?[5]
Oph. I think nothing, my lord.
Ham. That 's a fair thought to lie between maids' legs.
Oph. What is, my lord?
Ham. Nothing.
Oph. You are merry, my lord.
Ham. Who, I?
Oph. Ay, my lord.
Ham. O! your only jig-maker.[6] What should a man

of gallantry. So, in *The Queen of Corinth*, by Beaumont and Fletcher:

" Ushers her to her couch, *lies at her feet*
" *At solemn masques*, applauding what she laughs at."

Again, in Gascoigne's *Greene Knight's Farewell to Fancie:*

" To *lie along in ladies lappes*." *Steevens.*

[4] —— *I mean*, &c.] This speech and *Ophelia's* reply to it are omitted in the quartos. *Steevens.*

[5] *Do you think I meant* country matters?] Dr. Johnson, from a casual inadvertence, proposed to read—country *manners*. The old reading is certainly right. What Shakspeare meant to allude to, must be too obvious to every reader, to require any explanation. *Malone.*

[6] —— *your only* jig-maker.] There may have been some humour in this passage, the force of which is now diminished:

" ——— many gentlemen
" Are not, as in the days of understanding,
" Now satisfied without a *jig*, which since
" They cannot with their honour, call for after
" The play, they look to be serv'd up in the middle."
Changes, or Love in a Maze, by Shirley, 1632.

In *The Hog hath lost his Pearl*, 1614, one of the players comes to solicit a gentleman to *write a jig* for him. A *jig* was not in Shakspeare's time only a dance, but a ludicrous dialogue in metre, and of the lowest kind, like Hamlet's conversation with Ophelia. Many of these jigs are entered in the books of the Stationers' Company:—" Philips his *Jigg* of the slyppers, 1595. Kempe's *Jigg* of the Kitchin-stuff woman, 1595." *Steevens.*

The following lines in the prologue to Fletcher's *Love's Pilgrimage*, confirms Mr. Steevens's remark:

" ——— for approbation,
" A *jig* shall be clapp'd at, and every *rhyme*
" Prais'd and applauded by a clamorous chime."

A *jig* was not always in the form of a dialogue. Many historical ballads were formerly called *jigs*. See also, p. 116, n. 3. *Malone.*

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do, but be merry? for, look you, how cheerfully my mother looks, and my father died within these two hours.

Oph. Nay, 'tis twice two months, my lord.

Ham. So long? Nay, then let the devil wear black, for I 'll have a suit of sables.[7] O heavens! die two

A *jig*, though it signified a ludicrous dialogue in metre, yet it also was used for a dance. In the extract from Stephen Gosson in the next page but one, we have—

" —— tumbling, dancing of *gigges*." *Ritson.*

[7] —— *Nay, then let the devil wear black*, for *I 'll have a suit of sables.*] The conceit of these words is not taken. They are an ironical apology for his mother's cheerful looks: two months was long enough in conscience to make any dead husband forgotten. But the editors, in their nonsensical blunder, have made Hamlet say just the contrary. That the devil and he would both go into mourning, though his mother did not. The true reading is—*Nay, then let the devil wear black*, 'fore *I 'll have a suit of sable*. *'Fore*, i. e. before. As much as to say,—Let the devil wear black for me, I 'll have none. The Oxford editor despises an emendation so easy, and reads it thus,—*Nay, then let the devil wear black, for I 'll have a suit of* ermine. And you could expect no less, when such a critick had the dressing of him. But the blunder was a pleasant one. The senseless editors had wrote *sables*, the fur so called, for *sable*, black. And the critick only changed this fur for that; by a like figure, the common people say,—*You rejoice the cockles of my heart*, for *the muscles of my heart*; an unlucky mistake of one shell-fish for another. *Warburton.*

I know not why our editors should with such implacable anger persecute their predecessors. Οἱ νεκροὶ μὴ δάκνουσιν, the dead, it is true, can make no resistance, they may be attacked with great security; but since they can neither feel nor mend, the safety of mauling them seems greater than the pleasure; nor perhaps would it much misbeseem us to remember, amidst our triumphs over the *nonsensical* and *senseless*, that we likewise are men; that *debemur morti*, and as Swift observed to Burnet, shall soon be among the dead ourselves.

I cannot find how the common reading is nonsense, nor why Hamlet, when he laid aside his dress of mourning, in a country where it was *bitter cold*, and the air *nipping and eager*, should not have a *suit of sables*. I suppose it is well enough known, that the fur of sables is not black. *Johnson.*

A *suit of sables* was the richest dress that could be worn in Denmark. *Steevens.*

Here again is an equivoque. In Massinger's *Old Law*, we have,—

" —— A cunning grief,
" That 's only faced with *sables* for a show,
" But gawdy-hearted." *Farmer.*

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months ago, and not forgotten yet? Then there 's hope, a great man's memory may outlive his life half a year: But, by'r-lady, he must build churches then:[8] or else shall he suffer not thinking on, with the hobby-horse;[9]

—— *Nay, then let the devil wear black, for I 'll have a suit of* sables.] Nay then, says Hamlet, if my father be so long dead as you say, let the devil wear black; as for me, so far from wearing a mourning dress, I 'll wear the most costly and magnificent suit that can be procured: *a suit trimmed with sables.*

Our poet furnished Hamlet with a suit of sables on the present occasion, not, as I conceive, because such a dress was suited to "a country where it was bitter cold, and the air was nipping and eager," (as Dr. Johnson supposed) nor because "a suit of sables was the richest dress that could be worn in *Denmark*," (as Mr. Steevens has suggested) of which probably he had no knowledge, but because a suit trimmed with sables was in Shakspeare's time the richest dress worn by men in *England*. We have had again and again occasion to observe, that, wherever his scene might happen to be, the customs of his own country were still in his thoughts.

By the statute of apparel, 24 Henry VIII, c. 13, (article *furres*) it is ordained, that none under the degree of an *earl* may use *sables*.

Bishop says in his *Blossoms*, 1577, speaking of the extravagance of those times, that a *thousand ducates* were sometimes given for "a face of *sables*."

That *a suit of sables* was the magnificent dress of our author's time, appears from a passage in Ben Jonson's *Discoveries*: "Would you not laugh to meet *a great counsellor of state*, in a flat cap, with his trunk-hose, and a hobby-horse cloak, and yond haberdasher in a velvet gown trimm'd with *sables*?"

Florio, in his *Italian Dictionary*, 1598, thus explains *zibilini*: "The *rich* furre called sables."—*Sables* is the skin of the sable Martin. See Cotgrave's *French Dict.* 1611: "Sebilline Martre Sebel. The sable Martin; the beast whose skinne we call *sables*."

Malone.

[8] —— *but he must build churches then:*] Such benefactors to society were sure to be recorded by means of the feast day on which the patron saints and founders of churches were commemorated in every parish. This custom having been long disused, the names of the builders of sacred edifices are no longer known to the vulgar, and are preserved only in antiquarian memoirs.

Steevens.

[9] —— *suffer not thinking on, with the hobby-horse;*] Amongst the country May-games there was an hobby-horse, which, when the puritanical humour of those times opposed and discredited these games, was brought by the poets and ballad-makers as an instance of the ridiculous zeal of the sectaries: from these ballads Hamlet quotes a line or two. *Warburton.*

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whose epitaph is, *For, O, for, O, the hobby-horse is forgot.*[1]

Trumpets sound. The dumb Show follows.[2]

Enter a King and a Queen, very lovingly; the Queen embracing him, and he her. She kneels, and makes show of protestation unto him. He takes her up, and declines his head upon her neck: lays him down upon a bank of flowers; she, seeing him asleep, leaves him. Anon, comes in a fellow, takes off his crown, kisses it, and pours

1 —— *O, the hobby-horse is forgot.*] In *Love's Labour's Lost*, this line is also introduced. In a small black letter book entitled, *Plays Confuted*, by Stephen Gosson, I find the *hobby-horse* enumerated in the list of dances: "For the devil (says this author) beeside the beautie of the houses, and the stages, sendeth in gearish apparell, maskes, vauting, tumbling, dauncing of gigges, galiardes, morisces, *hobbi-horses*," &c. and in Green's *Tu Quoque*, 1614, the same expression occurs: "The other *hobby-horse* I perceive is not forgotten."

In TEXNOΓAMIA, or *The Marriage of the Arts*, 1618, is the following stage-direction:

"Enter a *hobby-horse*, dancing the morrice," &c.

Again, in Beaumont and Fletcher's *Women Pleased:*

"*Soto.* Shall the *hobby-horse* be forgot then,
"The hopeful *hobby-horse*, shall he lie founder'd?"

The scene in which this passage is, will very amply confirm all that Dr. Warburton has said concerning the *hobby-horse.*

Again, in Ben Jonson's *Entertainment for the Queen and Prince at Althorpe:*

"But see *the hobby-horse* is forgot,
"Fool, it must be your lot,
"To supply his want with faces
"And some other buffoon graces." *Steevens.*

2 —— *The dumb show follows.*] and appears to contain every circumstance of the murder of Hamlet's father. Now there is no apparent reason why the Usurper should not be as much affected by this mute representation of his crimes, as he is afterwards when the same action is accompanied by words.

I once conceived this might have been a kind of direction to the players, which was from mistake inserted in the editions; but the subsequent conversation between Hamlet and Ophelia, entirely destroys such a notion. *Pye.*

I cannot reconcile myself to the exhibition in dumb show, preceding the interlude which is injudiciously introduced by the author, and should always be omitted on the stage; as we cannot well conceive why the mute representation of this crime should not affect as much the conscience of the King, as the scene that follows it. *M. Mason.*

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poison in the King's ears, and exit. The Queen returns; finds the King dead, and makes passionate action. The poisoner, with some two or three Mutes, comes in again, seeming to lament with her. The dead body is carried away. The poisoner wooes the Queen with gifts; she seems loth and unwilling awhile, but, in the end, accepts his love. [Exeunt.

Oph. What means this, my lord?

Ham. Marry, this is miching mallecho; it means mischief.[3]

[3] *Marry, this is* miching mallecho; *it means mischief.*] To *mich* signified, originally, to keep hid and out of sight; and, as such men generally did it for the purposes of *lying in wait*, it then signified to rob. And in this sense Shakspeare uses the noun, a *micher*, when speaking of Prince Henry amongst a gang of robbers. *Shall the blessed son of heaven prove a* micher? *Shall the son of* England *prove a* thief? And in this sense it is used by Chaucer, in his translation of *Le Roman de la Rose*, where he turns the word *lierre*, (which is *larron, voleur,*) by *micher*. *Warburton.*

Dr. Warburton is right in his explanation of the word *miching*. So, in *The Raging Turk*, 1631:

" —— wilt thou, envious dotard,
" Strangle my greatness in a *miching* hole?"

Again, in Stanyhurst's Virgil, 1582:

" —— wherefore thus vainely in land Lybye *mitche* you?"

The quarto reads—*munching* Mallico. *Steevens.*

The word *miching* is daily used in the West of England for *playing truant*, or sculking about in private for *some sinister purpose;* and *malicho*, inaccurately written for *malheco*, signifies *mischief!* so that *miching malicho* is *mischief* on the *watch for opportunity*. When Ophelia asks Hamlet—" What means this?" she applies to him for *an explanation of what she had not seen in the show:* and not as Dr. Warburton would have it, *the* purpose *for* which the show was contrived. Besides, *malhechor* no more signifies a *poisoner*, than a perpetrator of *any other* crime. *Henley.*

—— *miching mallecho;*] A secret and wicked contrivance; a concealed wickedness. To *mich* is a provincial word, and was probably once general; signifying to lie hid, or play the truant. In Norfolk *michers* signify *pilferers*. The signification of *miching* in the present passage may be ascertained by a passage in Decker's *Wonderful Yeare*, 4to. 1603: " Those that could shift for a time,—went most bitterly *miching* and muffled, up and downe, with rue and wormwood stuft into their eyes and nostrills."

See also, Florio's *Italian Dictionary*, 1598, in v. *Acciapinare:* " To *miche*, to shrug or *sneak in some corner*, and with powting lips to shew some anger." In a subsequent passage we find that the murderer before he poisons the king makes *damnable faces*.

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Oph. Belike, this show imports the argument of the play.

Enter Prologue.

Ham. We shall know by this fellow: the players cannot keep counsel; they 'll tell all.

Oph. Will he tell us what this show meant?

Ham. Ay, or any show that you 'll show him: Be not you ashamed to show,[4] he 'll not shame to tell you what it means.

Where our poet met with the word *mallecho*, which in Minsheu's *Spanish Dictionary*, 1617, is defined *malefactum*, I am unable to ascertain. In the folio the word is spelt *malicho*. *Mallico* [in the quarto] is printed in a distinct character, as a proper name. *Malone.*

If, as Capell declares, (I know not on what authority) *Malicho* be the *Vice* of the Spanish Moralities, he should at least be distinguished by a capital. *Farmer.*

It is not, however, easy to be supposed that our readers discover pleasantry or even sense in "this is *miching* [or *munching*] mallico," no meaning as yet affixed to these words has entitled them to escape a further investigation. Omit them, and the text unites without their assistance:

"*Oph.* What means this, my lord?

"*Ham.* Marry, it means mischief."

Among the Shakspearian memoranda of the late Dr. Farmer, I met with the following—"At the beginning of *Grim the Collier of Croydon*, the ghost of *Malbecco* is introduced as a prolocutor." Query, therefore, if the obscure words already quoted, were not originally:—"This is *mimicking Malbecco;*" a private gloss by some friend on the margin of the MS. Hamlet, and thence ignorantly received into the text of Shakspeare."

It remains to be observed, that the *mimickry* imagined by Dr. Farmer, must lie in our author's stage-directions, &c. which, like *Malbecco's* legend, convey a pointed censure on the infidelity of married women. Or, to repeat the same idea in different words —the drift of the present dumb show and succeeding dialogue, was considered by the glosser as too congenial with the well-known invective in Spenser's *Fairy Queen*, Book III, or the contracted copy from it in the Induction to *Grim the Collier* &c. a comedy which was acted many years before it was printed. See Mr. Reed's *Old Plays*, Vol. XI, p. 189. *Steevens.*

[4] —— *Be not you ashamed to show*, &c.] The conversation of Hamlet with Ophelia, which cannot fail to disgust every modern reader, is probably such as was peculiar to the young and fashionable of the age of Shakspeare, which was, by no means, an age of delicacy. The poet is, however, blameable; for extravagance of thought, not indecency of expression, is the characteristick of

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Oph. You are naught, you are naught; I'll mark the play.

Pro. *For us, and for our tragedy,*
Here stooping to your clemency,
We beg your hearing patiently.

Ham. Is this a prologue, or the posy of a ring?

Oph. 'Tis brief, my lord.

Ham. As woman's love.

Enter a King *and a* Queen.

P. King. Full thirty times hath Phœbus' cart[5] gone round
Neptune's salt wash,[6] and Tellus' orbed ground;[7]
And thirty dozen moons, with borrow'd sheen,[8]
About the world have times twelve thirties been;
Since love our hearts, and Hymen did our hands,
Unite commutual in most sacred bands.

P. Queen. So many journeys may the sun and moon
Make us again count o'er, ere love be done!
But, woe is me, you are so sick of late,
So far from cheer, and from your former state,
That I distrust you. Yet, though I distrust,
Discomfort you, my lord, it nothing must:
For women fear too much, even as they love;[9]

madness, at least of such madness as should be represented on the scene. *Steevens.*

[5] —— *cart* —] A chariot was anciently so called. Thus, Chaucer, in *The Knight's Tale*, Mr. Tyrwhitt's edit. v. 2024:
" The *carter* overridden with his *cart*." *Steevens.*

[6] *Full thirty times hath Phœbus' cart gone round*
Neptune's salt wash, &c.] This speech of the Player King appears to me as a burlesque of the following passage in *The Comicall Historie of Alphonsus*, by R. G. 1599:
" Thrise ten times Phoebus with his golden beames
" Hath compassed the circle of the skie,
" Thrise ten times Ceres hath her workemen hir'd,
" And fild her barnes with frutefull crops of corne,
" Since first in priesthood I did lead my life." *Todd.*

[7] —— *orbed-ground;*] So also, in our author's *Lover's Complaint:*
" Sometimes diverted, their poor balls are tied
" To the *orbed earth*." *Steevens.*

[8] —— *sheen,*] Splendour, lustre. *Johnson.*

[9] —— *even as they love;*] Here seems to have been a line lost, which should have rhymed to *love*. *Johnson.*

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And women's fear and love hold quantity;
In neither aught, or in extremity.
Now, what my love is, proof hath made you know;
And as my love is siz'd, my fear is so.[1]
Where love is great,[2] the littlest doubts are fear;
Where little fears grow great, great love grows there.
P. King. 'Faith, I must leave thee, love, and shortly too;

This line is omitted in the folio. Perhaps a triplet was designed, and then instead of *love*, we should read *lust*. The folio gives the next line thus:

"*For* women's fear and love *holds* quantity." *Steevens.*

There is, I believe, no instance of a triplet being used in our author's time. Some trace of the lost line is found in the quartos, which read:

Either none in neither aught, &c.

Perhaps the words omitted might have been of this import:

"Either none *they feel, or an excess approve;*
"In neither aught, or in extremity."

In two preceding passages in the quarto, half a line was inadvertently omitted by the compositor. See p. 115, "*then senseless Ilium*, seeming," &c. and p. 133, "thus conscience does make cowards *of us all:*"—the words in Italick characters are not found in the quarto. *Malone.*

Every critick, before he controverts the assertions of his predecessor, ought to adopt the resolution of Othello:

"I 'll see, before I doubt, what I doubt, prove."

In Phaer and Twine's Virgil, 1584, the triplets are so frequent, that in two opposite pages of the tenth Book, not less than *seven* are to be met with. They are likewise as unsparingly employed in Golding's Ovid, 1587. Mr. Malone, in a note on *The Tempest*, Vol. II, p. 119, has quoted a passage from this very work, containing one instance of them. In Chapman's Homer they are also used, &c. &c. &c. In *The Tempest*, Act IV, sc. i. Many other examples of them occur in *Love's Labour's Lost*, Act III, sc. i, as well as in *The Comedy of Errors*, Act II and III, &c. &c.—and, yet more unluckily for my opponent, the Prologue to the Mock Tragedy, now under consideration, consists of a triplet, which in our last edition stood at the top of the same page in which he supposed "no instance of a triplet being used in our author's time." *Steevens.*

[1] *And as my love is* siz'd, *my fear is so.*] Cleopatra expresses herself much in the same manner, with regard to her grief for the loss of Antony:

"——— our *size* of sorrow,
"*Proportion'd* to our *cause*, must be as *great*
"As *that* which makes it." *Theobald.*

[2] *Where love* &c.] These two lines are omitted in the folio. *Steevens.*

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My operant powers[3] their functions leave to do:
And thou shalt live in this fair world behind,
Honour'd, belov'd; and, haply, one as kind
For husband shalt thou ——
P. Queen. O, confound the rest!
Such love must needs be treason in my breast:
In second husband let me be accurst!
None wed the second, but who kill'd the first.
Ham. That's wormwood.
P. Queen. The instances,[4] that second marriage move,
Are base respects of thrift, but none of love;
A second time I kill my husband dead,
When second husband kisses me in bed.
P. King. I do believe, you think what now you speak;
But, what we do determine, oft we break.
Purpose is but the slave to memory;[5]
Of violent birth, but poor validity:
Which now, like fruit unripe, sticks on the tree;
But fall, unshaken, when they mellow be.
Most necessary 'tis, that we forget
To pay ourselves what to ourselves is debt:[6]
What to ourselves in passion we propose,
The passion ending, doth the purpose lose.
The violence of either grief or joy
Their own enactures with themselves destroy:[7]
Where joy most revels, grief doth most lament;

[3] —— operant *powers* —] *Operant* is active. Shakspeare gives it in *Timon of Athens* as an epithet to *poison*. Heywood has likewise used it in his *Royal King and Loyal Subject*, 1637:

" —— may my *operant* parts
" Each one forget their office!"

The word is now obsolete. *Steevens.*

[4] *The* instances,] The *motives*. *Johnson.*

[5] Purpose *is but the* slave *to memory;*] So, in *King Henry IV*, Part I:

" But *thought 's* the *slave of life.*" *Steevens.*

[6] —— *what to ourselves is debt:*] The performance of a resolution, in which only the *resolver* is interested, is a debt only to himself, which he may therefore remit at pleasure. *Johnson.*

[7] *The violence of either grief or joy*
Their own enactures *with themselves destroy:*] What grief or joy *enact* or determine in their violence, is revoked in their abatement. *Enactures* is the word in the quarto; all the modern editions have *enactors*. *Johnson.*

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Grief joys, joy grieves, on slender accident.
This world is not for aye; nor 'tis not strange,
That even our loves should with our fortunes change;
For 'tis a question left us yet to prove,
Whether love lead fortune, or else fortune love.
The great man down, you mark his favourite flies;
The poor advanc'd makes friends of enemies.
And hitherto doth love on fortune tend:
For who not needs, shall never lack a friend;
And who in want a hollow friend doth try,
Directly seasons him his enemy.[8]
But, orderly to end where I begun,—
Our wills, and fates, do so contráry run,
That our devices still are overthrown;
Our thoughts are ours, their ends none of our own:
So think thou wilt no second husband wed;
But die thy thoughts, when thy first lord is dead.

P. Queen. Nor earth to me give food,[9] nor heaven light!
Sport and repose lock from me, day, and night!
To desperation[1] turn my trust and hope!
An anchor's cheer in prison be my scope![2]

[8] —— seasons *him his enemy.*] This quaint phrase infests almost every ancient English composition. Thus, in Chapman's translation of the fifteenth Book of Homer's *Odyssey:*

" —— taught with so much woe
" As thou hast suffer'd, to be *season'd* true." *Steevens.*

[9] *Nor earth* to me give *food,*] Thus the quarto, 1604. The folio and the late editors read:

Nor earth to give me *food,* ——.

An imperative or optative verb was evidently intended here, as in the following line:

" Sport and repose *lock* from me," &c. *Malone.*

A very similar imprecation,—

" Day, yield me not thy light; nor night, thy rest!" &c. occurs in *King Richard III.* See Vol. XI, p. 155. *Steevens.*

[1] *To desperation* &c.] This and the following line are omitted in the folio. *Steevens.*

[2] *An* anchor's *cheer in prison be my scope!*] May my whole liberty and enjoyment be to live on hermit's fare in a prison. *Anchor* is for *anchoret. Johnson.*

This abbreviation of the word *anchoret* is very ancient. I find it in the Romance of *Robert the Devil,* printed by Wynken de Worde: " We haue robbed and killed nonnes, holy *aunkers,* preestes, clerkes," &c. Again: " the foxe will be an *aunker,* for he begynneth to preche."

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Each opposite, that blanks the face of joy,
Meet what I would have well, and it destroy!
Both here, and hence, pursue me lasting strife,
If, once a widow, ever I be wife!

Ham. If she should break it now,—— [*To* OPH.

P. King. 'Tis deeply sworn. Sweet, leave me here a while;
My spirits grow dull, and fain I would beguile
The tedious day with sleep. [*Sleeps.*

P. Queen. Sleep rock thy brain;
And never come mischance between us twain! [*Exit.*

Ham. Madam, how like you this play?

Queen. The lady doth protest too much, methinks.

Ham. O, but she 'll keep her word.

King. Have you heard the argument? Is there no offence in 't?

Ham. No, no, they do but jest, poison in jest; no offence i' the world.

King. What do you call the play?

Ham. The mouse-trap.[3] Marry, how? Tropically. This play is the image of a murder done in Vienna: Gonzago is the duke's name;[4] his wife, Baptista:[5] you shall see

Again, in *The Vision of Pierce Plowman:*

"As *ankers* and hermits that hold them in her selles."

This and the foregoing line are not in the folio. I believe we should read—anchor's *chair*. So, in the second Satire of Hall's fourth Book, edit. 1602, p. 18:

"*Sit* seven yeres pining in an *anchore's cheyre*,
"To win some parched shreds of minivere." *Steevens.*

The old copies read—*And* anchor's cheer. The correction was made by Mr. Theobald. *Malone.*

[3] *The mouse-trap.*] He calls it the *mouse-trap*, because it is—

"—————— the thing
"In which he 'll catch the conscience of the king."
Steevens.

[4] —— *Gonzago is the* duke's *name;*] Thus all the old copies: yet in the stage-direction for the dumb-show, and the subsequent entrance, we have "*Enter a* king *and queen*," &c. and in the latter part of this speech both the quarto and folio read:

"—— Lucianus, nephew to the *king*."

This seeming inconsistency, however, may be reconciled. Though the interlude is the *image* of the murder of a *duke* of Vienna, or in other words founded upon that story, the poet might make the principal person of *his fable* a *king*. *Malone.*

[5] —— *Baptista:*] *Baptista* is, I think, in Italian, the name always of a man. *Johnson.*

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anon; 'tis a knavish piece of work: But what of that? your majesty, and we that have free souls, it touches us not: Let the galled jade wince,[6] our withers are unwrung.—

Enter LUCIANUS.

This is one Lucianus, nephew to the king.[7]

Oph. You are as good as a chorus, my lord.[8]

Ham. I could interpret between you and your love, if I could see the puppets dallying.[9]

Oph. You are keen, my lord, you are keen.

Ham. It would cost you a groaning, to take off my edge.

Oph. Still better, and worse.[1]

Ham. So you mistake your husbands.[2]—Begin, murderer;—leave thy damnable faces, and begin. Come:——

must take

I believe *Battista* is never used singly by the Italians, being uniformly compounded with *Giam* (for *Giovanni*,) and meaning of course, *John the Baptist*. Nothing more was therefore necessary to detect the forgery of Shebbeare's *Letters on the English Nation*, than his ascribing them to *Battista* Angeloni. *Ritson.*

[6] *Let the galled jade wince,*] This is a proverbial saying. So, in *Damon and Pythias*, 1582:

" I know the *gall'd horse* will soonest *wince*." *Steevens.*

[7] —— *nephew to the* king.] i. e. to the king in the play then represented. The modern editors, following Mr. Theobald, read —*nephew to the* duke,—though they have not followed that editor in substituting *duke and dutchess*, for *king and queen*, in the dumb show and subsequent entrance. There is no need of departing from the old copies. See n. 4. *Malone.*

[8] *You are as good as a* chorus, *&c.*] The use to which Shakspeare converted the *chorus*, may be seen in *King Henry V. Henley.*

[9] Ham. *I could interpret* &c.] This refers to the interpreter, who formerly sat on the stage at all *motions* or *puppet-shews*, and interpreted to the audience.

So, in *The Two Gentlemen of Verona:*

" O excellent *motion!* O exceeding *puppet!*

" Now will he *interpret* for her."

Again, in Greene's *Groatsworth of Wit*, 1621: " — It was I that penned the moral of Man's wit, the dialogue of Dives, and for seven years' space was absolute *interpreter of the puppets*." *Steevens.*

[1] *Still better, and worse.*] i. e. better in regard to the wit of your *double entendre*, but worse in respect to the grossness of your meaning. *Steevens.*

[2] *So you* mistake *your husbands.*] Read—*So you* must take *your husbands*; that is, *for better, for worse. Johnson.*

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—— The croaking raven
Doth bellow for revenge.

Luc. Thoughts black, hands apt, drugs fit, and time agreeing;
Confederate season, else no creature seeing;
Thou mixture rank, of midnight weeds[3] collected,
With Hecat's ban thrice blasted, thrice infected,
Thy natural magick and dire property,
On wholesome life usurp immediately.

[*Pours the Poison into the Sleeper's Ears.*

Ham. He poisons him i' the garden for his estate. His name 's Gonzago: the story is extant, and written in very choice Italian: You shall see anon, how the murderer gets the love of Gonzago's wife.

Oph. The king rises.

Ham. What! frighted with false fire![4]

Queen. How fares my lord?

Pol. Give o'er the play.

King. Give me some light:—away!

Pol. Lights, lights, lights![5]

[*Exeunt all but* HAM. *and* HOR.

Ham. Why, let the strucken deer go weep,[6]
The hart ungalled play:
For some must watch, while some must sleep;
Thus runs the world away.—

Mr. Theobald proposed the same reading in his *Shakspeare Restored*, however he lost it afterwards. *Steevens.*

So you mistake *your husbands.*] I believe this to be right: the word is sometimes used in this ludicrous manner: "Your true trick, rascal, (says Ursula, in *Bartholomew Fair*,) must be to be ever busie, and *mistake* away the bottles and cans, before they be half drunk off." *Farmer.*

I believe the meaning is—you do amiss for yourselves to take husbands for the worse. You should take them only for the better. *Tollet.*

[3] —— midnight *weeds* —] The force of the epithet—*midnight*, will be best displayed by a corresponding passage in *Macbeth*:
"Root of hemlock, *digg'd i' the dark.*" *Steevens.*

[4] *What! frighted with false fire!*] This speech is omitted in the quartos. *Steevens.*

[5] *Lights, lights, lights!*] The quartos give this speech to *Polonius*. *Steevens.*

In the folio *All* is prefixed to this speech. *Malone.*

[6] —— *strucken deer go weep,*] See Vol. V, p. 36, n. 8. *Steevens.*

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Would not this, sir, and a forest of feathers,[7] (if the rest of my fortunes turn Turk with me,[8]) with two Provencial roses on my razed shoes,[9] get me a fellowship in a cry of players,[1] sir?

[7] *Would not, this, sir, and a forest of* feathers, &c.] It appears from Decker's *Gul's Hornbooke*, that feathers were much worn on the stage in Shakspeare's time. *Malone.*

I believe, since the English stage began, feathers were worn by every company of players that could afford to purchase them. *Steevens.*

[8] —— turn Turk *with me,*] This expression has occurred already in *Much Ado About Nothing*, and I have met with it in several old comedies. So, in Greene's *Tu Quoque*, 1614: "This it is to *turn Turk*, from an absolute and most compleat gentleman, to a most absurd, ridiculous, and fond lover." It means, I believe, no more than to change condition fantastically. Again, in Decker's *Honest Whore*, 1635:

"—— 'tis damnation,
"If you *turn Turk* again."

Perhaps the phrase had its rise from some popular story like that of *Ward* and *Dansiker*, the two famous pirates; an account of whose overthrow was published by A. Barker, 1609: and, in 1612, a play was written on the same subject called *A Christian turn'd Turk*. *Steevens.*

[9] —— Provencial *roses on my* razed *shoes,*] [Old copies—*provincial.*] Why *provincial* roses? Undoubtedly we should read—*Provencial*, or (with the French ç) *Provençal*. He means roses of *Provence*, a beautiful species of rose, and formerly much cultivated. *T. Warton.*

They are still more cultivated than any other flower of the same tribe. *Steevens.*

When shoe-strings were worn, they were covered, where they met in the middle, by a ribband, gathered in the form of a rose. So, in an old Song:

"Gil-de-Roy was a bonny boy,
"Had *roses* tull his *shoon.*" *Johnson.*

These *roses* are often mentioned by our ancient dramatick writers.

So, in *The Devil's Law Case*, 1623:

"With overblown *roses* to hide your gouty ancles."

Again, in *The Roaring Girl*, 1611: "—— many handsome legs in silk stockings have villainous splay-feet, for all their great *roses.*"

The reading of the quartos is *raz'd shoes*; that of the folio *rac'd shoes*. *Razed* shoes may mean *slashed* shoes, i. e. with cuts or openings in them. The poet might have written *raised shoes*, i. e. shoes with *high heels*; such as by adding to the stature, are supposed to increase the dignity of a player. In Stubbs's *Anatomie of Abuses*, 1595, there is a chapter on the *corked shoes* in

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Hor. Half a share.

Ham. A whole one, I.[2]

England, " which (he says) beare them up two inches or more from the ground, &c. some of red, blacke, &c. *razed*, carved, cut, and stitched," &c.

Again, in Warner's *Albion's England*, 1602, B. IX, ch. xlvii:

" Then wore they shoes of ease, now of an inch-broad, *corked high*."

Mr. Pope reads—*rayed* shoes, i. e. (as interpreted by Dr. Johnson) " shoes *braided in lines*." Stowe's Chronicle, anno 1353, mentions women's hoods *reyed* or striped. *Raie* is the French word for a stripe. Johnson's *Collection of Ecclesiastical Laws* informs us, under the years 1222 and 1353, that in disobedience of the canon, the clergy's shoes were *chequered* with red and green, exceeding long, and variously pinked.

The reading of the quartos may likewise receive additional support. Bulwer, in his *Artificial Changeling*, speaks of gallants who pink and *raze* their satten, damask, and Duretto skins. To *raze* and to *race*, alike signify *to streak*. See Minsheu's Dict. in v. To *rase*. The word, though differently spelt, is used in nearly the same signification in Markham's *Country Farm*, p. 585: " — baking all (i. e. wafer cakes) together between two irons, having within them many *raced* and checkered draughts after the manner of small squares." *Steevens.*

[1] —— *a* cry *of players*,] Allusion to a pack of hounds. *Warburton.*

A *pack* of hounds was once called a *cry* of hounds. So, in *The Two Noble Kinsmen*, by Beaumont and Fletcher:

" ——— and well have halloo'd
" To a deep *cry* of hounds."

Again, in *A Midsummer Night's Dream:*

" ——— a *cry* more tuneable
" Was never halloo'd to, or cheer'd with horn."

Milton, likewise, has—" A *cry* of hell-hounds." *Steevens.*

—— *a* cry *of players*,] A troop or company of players. So, in *Coriolanus:*

" —— You have made good work,
" You and your *cry*."

Again, in a *Strange Horse-race*, by Thomas Decker, 1613: " The last race they ran, (for you must know they ran many,) was from a *cry* of serjeants." *Malone.*

[2] Hor. *Half a* share.
Ham. *A whole one*, I.] It should be, I think,—
A whole one;—ay,—
For &c.

The actors in our author's time had not annual salaries as at present. The whole receipts of each theatre were divided into shares, of which the proprietors of the theatre, or *house-keepers*, as they were called, had some; and each actor had one or more shares, or part of a share, according to his merit. *Malone.*

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For thou dost know, O Damon dear,[3]
This realm dismantled was
Of Jove himself; and now reigns here
A very, very—peacock.[4]
Hor. You might have rhymed.

A whole one, I, in familiar language, means no more than—I think myself entitled to a whole one. *Steevens.*

[3] —— *O* Damon *dear,*] Hamlet calls Horatio by this name, in allusion to the celebrated friendship between *Damon* and *Pythias.* A play on this subject was written by Richard Edwards, and published in 1582. *Steevens.*

The friendship of Damion and Pythias is also enlarged upon in a book that was probably very popular in Shakspeare's youth, Sir Thomas Eliot's *Governour,* 1553. *Malone.*

[4] *A very, very*—peacock.] This alludes to a fable of the birds choosing a king; instead of the eagle, a peacock. *Pope.*

The old copies have it *paiock, paicocke,* and *pajocke.* I substitute *paddock,* as nearest to the traces of the corrupted reading. I have, as Mr. Pope says, been willing to substitute any thing in the place of his *peacock.* He thinks a fable alluded to, of the birds choosing a king; instead of the *eagle,* a *peacock.* I suppose, he must mean the fable of Barlandus, in which it is said, the birds, being weary of their state of anarchy, moved for the setting up of a king; and the *peacock* was elected on account of his gay feathers. But, with submission, in this passage of our Shakspeare, there is not the least mention made of the *eagle* in antithesis to the *peacock;* and it must be by a very uncommon figure, that Jove himself stands in the place of his *bird.* I think, Hamlet is setting his father's and uncle's characters in contrast to each other: and means to say, that by his father's death the state was stripped of a godlike monarch, and that now in his stead reigned the most despicable poisonous animal that could be; a mere *paddock* or *toad. PAD, bufo, rubeta, major;* a toad. This word I take to be of Hamlet's own substituting. The verses repeated, seem to be from some old ballad; in which, rhyme being necessary, I doubt not but the last verse ran thus:

A very, very——ass. *Theobald.*

A *peacock* seems proverbial for a fool. Thus, Gascoigne, in his *Weeds:*

" A theefe, a cowarde, and a *peacocke* foole." *Farmer.*

In the last scene of this Act, Hamlet, speaking of the King, uses the expression which Theobald would introduce:

" Would from a *paddock,* from a bat, a gib,
" Such dear concernments hide?"

The reading, *peacock,* which I believe to be the true one, was first introduced by Mr. Pope.

Mr. Theobald is unfaithful in his account of the old copies. No copy of authority reads—*paicocke.* The quarto, 1604, has *paiock;* the folio, 1623, *paiocke.*

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Ham. O good Horatio, I 'll take the ghost's word for a thousand pound. Didst perceive?

Hor. Very well, my lord.

Ham. Upon the talk of the poisoning, ——

Hor. I did very well note him.

Ham. Ah, ha!—Come, some musick; come, the recorders.—

"For if the king like not the comedy,
Why then, belike,[5]—he likes it not, perdy."[6]—

Enter ROSENCRANTZ *and* GUILDENSTERN.

Come, some musick.

Guil. Good my lord, vouchsafe me a word with you.

Ham. Sir, a whole history.

Guil. The king, sir, ——

Ham. Ay, sir, what of him?

Guil. Is, in his retirement, marvellous distempered.

Ham. With drink, sir?[7]

Guil. No, my lord, with choler.

Ham. Your wisdom should show itself more richer, to signify this to the doctor; for, for me to put him to his purgation, would, perhaps, plunge him into more choler.

Guil. Good my lord, put your discourse into some frame, and start not so wildly from my affair.

Ham. I am tame, sir:—pronounce.

Guil. The queen, your mother, in most great affliction of spirit, hath sent me to you.

Ham. You are welcome.

Guil. Nay, good my lord, this courtesy is not of the right breed. If it shall please you to make me a wholesome answer, I will do your mother's commandment:

Shakspeare, I suppose, means, that the King struts about with a false pomp, to which he has no right. See Florio's Italian Dictionary, 1568: "*Pavonneggiare.* To jet up and down, fondly gazing upon himself, as a peacock doth." *Malone.*

[5] *Why then, belike,*] Hamlet was going on to draw the consequence, when the courtiers entered. *Johnson.*

[6] —— *he likes it not,* perdy.] *Perdy* is the corruption of *par Dieu,* and is not uncommon in the old plays. So, in *The Play of the Four P's,* 1569:

"In that, you Palmer, as deputie,
"May clearly discharge him, *pardie.*" *Steevens.*

[7] *With drink, sir?*] Hamlet takes particular care that his uncle's love of drink shall not be forgotten. *Johnson.*

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if not, your pardon, and my return, shall be the end of my business.

Ham. Sir, I cannot.

Guil. What, my lord?

Ham. Make you a wholesome answer; my wit 's diseased: But, sir, such answer as I can make, you shall command; or, rather, as you say, my mother: therefore no more, but to the matter: My mother, you say, ——

Ros. Then thus she says; Your behaviour hath struck her into amazement and admiration.

Ham. O wonderful son, that can so astonish a mother! —But is there no sequel at the heels of this mother's admiration? impart.

Ros. She desires to speak with you in her closet, ere you go to bed.

Ham. We shall obey, were she ten times our mother. Have you any further trade[8] with us?

Ros. My lord, you once did love me.

Ham. And do still, by these pickers and stealers.[9]

Ros. Good my lord, what is your cause of distemper? you do, surely, bar the door upon your own liberty, if you deny your griefs to your friend.

Ham. Sir, I lack advancement.

Ros. How can that be, when you have the voice of the king himself for your succession in Denmark?[1]

Ham. Ay, sir, but, *While the grass grows*,—the proverb is something musty.[2]

[8] ——*further trade* —] Further business; further dealing. *Johnson.*

[9] —— *by these pickers* &c.] By these hands. *Johnson.*

By these hands, says Dr. Johnson, and rightly. But the phrase is taken from our church catechism, where the catechumen, in his duty to his neighbour, is taught to keep his hands from *picking and stealing*. *Whalley.*

[1] —— *when you have the voice of the king himself for your succession in Denmark?*] Act I, sc. ii. *Malone.*

[2] *Ay, sir, but,* While the grass grows,—*the proverb is something musty,*] The remainder of this old proverb is preserved in Whetstone's *Promos and Cassandra*, 1578:

"Whylst grass doth growe, *oft sterves the seely steede.*"

Again, in *The Paradise of daintie Devises*, 1578:

"To whom of old this proverbe well it serves,
"*While grass doth growe, the silly horse he starves.*"

Hamlet means to intimate, that whilst he is waiting for the suc-

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Enter the Players, *with Recorders.*[3]

O, the recorders:—let me see one.—To withdraw with you:[4]—Why do you go about to recover the wind of me,[5] as if you would drive me into a toil?

Guil. O, my lord, if my duty be too bold, my love is too unmannerly.[6]

cession to the throne of Denmark, he may himself be taken off by death. *Malone.*

[3] —— *Recorders.*] i. e. a kind of large flute. See Vol. II, p. 360, n. 3.

To *record* anciently signified to sing or modulate. *Steevens.*

[4] *To withdraw with you:*] These last words have no meaning, as they stand; yet none of the editors have attempted to amend them. They were probably spoken to the Players, whom Hamlet wished to get rid of:—I therefore should suppose that we ought to read, "so, withdraw you;" or, "so withdraw, will you?"

M. Mason.

Here Mr. Malone adds the following stage direction:—[*Taking Guildenstern aside.*] But the foregoing obscure words may refer to some gesture which Guildenstern had used, and which, at first, was interpreted by Hamlet into a signal for him to attend the speaker into another room. "To withdraw with you?" (says he) Is that your meaning? But finding his friends continue to move mysteriously about him, he adds, with some resentment, a question more easily intelligible. *Steevens.*

[5] —— *recover the wind of me,*] So, in an ancient MS. play entitled *The Second Maiden's Tragedy:*

"—— Is that next?

"Why, then I have your ladyship *in the wind.*" *Steevens.*

Again, in Churchyard's *Worthiness of Wales:*

"Their cunning can with craft so cloke a troeth,

"That hardly we shall *have them in the winde,*

"To smell them forth or yet their fineness finde."

Henderson.

[6] *O, my lord, if my duty be too bold, my love is too unmannerly.*] i. e. if my duty to the *king* makes me press you a little, my love to *you* makes me still more importunate. If that makes me *bold,* this makes me even *unmannerly. Warburton.*

I believe we should read—*my love is* not *unmannerly.* My conception of this passage is, that, in consequence of Hamlet's moving to take the recorder, Guildenstern also shifts his ground, in order to place himself *beneath* the prince in his new position. This, Hamlet ludicrously calls "*going about to recover the wind,*" &c. and Guildenstern may answer properly enough, I think, and like a courtier: "*if my duty* to the king makes me *too bold* in pressing you upon a disagreeable subject, *my love* to you will make me not *unmannerly,* in showing you all possible marks of respect and attention." *Tyrwhitt.*

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Ham. I do not well understand that. Will you play upon this pipe?

Guil. My lord, I cannot.

Ham. I pray you.

Guil. Believe me, I cannot.

Ham. I do beseech you.

Guil. I know no touch of it, my lord.

Ham. 'Tis as easy as lying: govern these ventages[7] with your fingers and thumb,[8] give it breath with your mouth, and it will discourse most eloquent musick. Look you, these are the stops.[9]

[7] —— *ventages* —] The holes of a flute. *Johnson.*

[8] —— *and thumb,*] The first quarto reads—*with your fingers and the* umber. This may probably be the ancient name for that piece of moveable brass at the end of a flute which is either raised or depressed by the finger. The word *umber* is used by Stowe the chronicler, who, describing a single combat between two knights, says—"he brast up his *umber* three times." Here, the *umber* means the visor of the helmet. So, in Spenser's *Fairy Queene*, B. III, c. i, st. 42:

"But the brave maid would not disarmed be,
"But only vented up her *umbriere*,
"And so did let her goodly visage to appere."

Again, Book IV, sc. iv:

"And therewith smote him on his *umbriere*."

Again, in the Second Book of Lidgate on the Trojan War, 1513:

"Thorough the *umber* into Troylus' face." *Steevens.*

If a *recorder* had a brass key like the *German Flute*, we are to follow the reading of the quarto; for then the thumb is not concerned in the government of the ventages or stops. If a *recorder* was like a *tabourer's pipe*, which has no brass key, but has a stop for the thumb, we are to read—*Govern these ventages with your finger and thumb.* In Cotgrave's Dictionary, *ombre*, *ombraire*, *ombriere*, and *ombrelle*, are all from the Latin *umbra*, and signify a shadow, an umbrella, or any thing that shades or hides the face from the sun; and hence they may have been applied to any thing that hides or covers another; as for example, they may have been applied to the brass key that covers the hole in the German flute. So, Spenser used *umbriere* for the visor of the helmet, as Rous's *History of the Kings of England* uses *umbrella* in the same sense. *Tollet.*

[9] —— *the* stops.] The sounds formed by occasionally stopping the holes, while the instrument is played upon. So, in the Prologue to *King Henry V:*

"Rumour is a *pipe*—
"And of so easy and so plain a *stop*," &c. *Malone.*

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Guil. But these cannot I command to any utterance of harmony; I have not the skill.

Ham. Why, look you now, how unworthy a thing you make of me? You would play upon me; you would seem to know my stops; you would pluck out the heart of my mystery; you would sound me from my lowest note to the top of my compass: and there is much musick, excellent voice, in this little organ; yet cannot you make it speak. 'Sblood, do you think, I am easier to be played on than a pipe? Call me what instrument you will, though you can fret me, you cannot play upon me.

Enter POLONIUS.

God bless you, sir!

Pol. My lord, the queen would speak with you, and presently.

Ham. Do you see yonder cloud, that 's almost in shape of a camel?

Pol. By the mass, and 'tis like a camel, indeed.

Ham. Methinks, it is like a weasel.[1]

[1] *Methinks*, &c.] This passage has been printed in modern editions thus:

Ham. *Methinks, it is like* an ouzle, *&c.*

Pol. *It is* black *like an* ouzle.

The first folio reads,—*It is like a* weazel.

Pol. *It is* back'd *like* a weazel—: and what occasion for alteration there was, I cannot discover. The *weasel* is remarkable for the length of its *back;* but though I believe a *black weasel* is not easy to be found, yet it is as likely that the cloud should resemble a *weasel* in shape, as an *ouzle* (i. e. black-bird) in colour.

Mr. Tollet observes, that we might read—"it is *beck'd* like a weasel," i. e. weasel-snouted. So, in Holinshed's *Description of England*, p. 172: "if he be *wesell-beck'd*." Quarles uses this term of reproach in his *Virgin Widow*: "Go you *weazel-snouted*, addle-pated," &c. Mr. Tollet adds, that Milton in his *Lycidas*, calls a promontory *beaked*, i. e. prominent like the *beak* of a bird, or a ship. *Steevens.*

Ham. *Methinks it is like a weazel.*

Pol. *It is* backed *like a weazel.*] Thus the quarto, 1604, and the folio. In a more modern quarto, that of 1611, *backed*, the original reading, was corrupted into *black.*

Perhaps in the original edition the words *camel* and *weazel* were shuffled out of their places. The poet might have intended the dialogue to proceed thus:

"*Ham.* Do you see yonder cloud, that 's almost in the shape of a *weazel?*

"*Pol.* By the mass, and 'tis like a weazel, indeed.

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Pol. It is back'd like a weasel.

Ham. Or, like a whale?

Pol. Very like a whale.

Ham. Then will I come to my mother by and by.—They fool me to the top of my bent.[2]—I will come by and by.

Pol. I will say so. [*Exit* POL.

Ham. By and by is easily said.—Leave me, friends.

[*Exeunt* ROS. GUIL. HOR. *&c.*

'Tis now the very witching time of night;
When churchyards yawn, and hell itself breathes out
Contagion to this world: Now could I drink hot blood,
And do such business as the bitter day[3]
Would quake to look on. Soft; now to my mother.—
O, heart, lose not thy nature; let not ever
The soul of Nero enter this firm bosom:
Let me be cruel, not unnatural:
I will speak daggers to her,[4] but use none;
My tongue and soul in this be hypocrites:

" *Ham.* Methinks, it is like a *camel.*

" *Pol.* It is backed like a *camel.*

The protuberant back of a camel seems more to resemble a cloud, than the back of a weazel does. *Malone.*

[2] *They fool me to the top of my bent.*] They compel me to play the fool, till I can endure it no longer. *Johnson.*

Perhaps a term in archery; i. e. as far as the bow will admit of being bent without breaking. *Douce.*

[3] *And do such business as* the bitter day —] Thus the quarto. The folio reads:

And do such bitter business *as the day* &c. *Malone.*

The expression *bitter business* is still in use, and though at present a vulgar phrase, might not have been such in the age of Shakspeare. The *bitter* day is the day rendered hateful or *bitter* by the commission of some act of mischief.

Watts, in his *Logick*, says, " *Bitter* is an equivocal word; there is *bitter* wormwood, there are *bitter* words, there are *bitter* enemies, and a *bitter* cold morning." It is, in short, any thing unpleasing or hurtful. *Steevens.*

[4] *I will speak* daggers *to her,*] A similar expression occurs in *The Return from Parnassus,* 1606: " They are pestilent fellows, they speak nothing but *bodkins.*" It has been already observed, that a *bodkin* anciently signified a *short dagger.*

It may, however, be observed, that in the *Aulularia* of Plautus, Act II, sc. i, a phrase not less singular occurs:

" ME. Quia mitri misero cerebrum excutiunt

" Tua dicta, soror: *lapides loqueris.*" *Steevens.*

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How in my words soever she be shent,[5]
To give them seals[6] never, my soul, consent! [*Exit.*

SCENE III.

A Room in the same.

Enter King, ROSENCRANTZ, *and* GUILDENSTERN.

King. I like him not; nor stands it safe with us,
To let his madness range. Therefore, prepare you;
I your commission will forthwith despatch,
And he to England shall along with you:[7]
The terms of our estate may not endure
Hazard so near us, as doth hourly grow
Out of his lunes.[8]

[5] —— *be* shent,] To *shend*, is to reprove harshly, to treat with rough language. So, in *The Coxcomb* of Beaumont and Fletcher:

" —— We shall be *shent* soundly." *Steevens.*

See *Coriolanus*, Act V, sc. ii, Vol. XIII. *Malone.*

Shent seems to mean something more than reproof, by the following passage from *The Mirror for Magistrates:* Thomas Mowbray, Duke of Norfolk, is the speaker, and he relates his having betrayed the Duke of Gloucester and his confederates to the King, "for which (says he) they were all tane and *shent.*"

Hamlet surely means, "however my mother may be *hurt*, *wounded*, or *punish'd*, by my *words*, let me never consent" &c.

Henderson.

[6] *To give them seals* —] i. e. put them in execution. *Warburton.*

[7] *I like him not; nor stands it safe with us,*
To let his madness range. Therefore, prepare you;
I your commission will forthwith despatch,
And he to England shall along with you:] In *The Hystory of Hamblett*, bl. l. the king does not adopt this scheme of sending Hamlet to England till after the death of Polonius; and though he is described as doubtful whether Polonius was slain by Hamlet, his apprehension lest he might himself meet the same fate as the old courtier, is assigned as the motive for his wishing the Prince out of the kingdom. This at first inclined me to think that this short scene, either from the negligence of the copyist or the printer, might have been misplaced; but it is certainly printed as the author intended, for in the next scene Hamlet says to his mother, "I must to England; you know that," before the King could have heard of the death of Polonius. *Malone.*

[8] *Out of his* lunes.] [The folio reads—*Out of his* lunacies.] The old quartos:

Out of his brows.

This was from the ignorance of the first editors; as is this unne-

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Guil. We will ourselves provide:
Most holy and religious fear it is,

cessary Alexandrine, which we owe to the players. The poet, I am persuaded wrote:

—— *as doth hourly grow*
Out of his lunes.

i. e. his *madness, frenzy. Theobald.*

I take *brows* to be, properly read, *frows*, which, I think, is a provincial word for *perverse humours;* which being, I suppose, not understood, was changed to *lunacies*. But of this I am not confident. *Johnson.*

I would receive Theobald's emendation, because Shakspeare uses the word *lunes* in the same sense in *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, and *The Winter's Tale.*

I have met, however, with an instance in support of Dr. Johnson's conjecture:

"—— were you but as favourable as you are *frowish* —."
Tully's Love, by Greene, 1616.

Froes is also used by Chapman, in his version of the Sixth *Iliad*, for *furious* women:

"———— ungodly fears
"He put the *froes* in, seiz'd their god —."

Perhaps, however, Shakspeare designed a metaphor from horned cattle, whose powers of being dangerous increase with the *growth of their brows. Steevens.*

The two readings of *brows* and *lunes*—when taken in connection with the passages referred to by Mr. Steevens, in *The Winter's Tale*, and *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, plainly figure forth the image under which the King apprehended danger from Hamlet:—viz. that of a bull, which, in his frenzy, might not only gore, but push him from his throne.—"The hazard that hourly grows out of his BROWS" (according to the quartos) corresponds to "*the* SHOOTS *from the* ROUGH PASH," [that is *the* TUFTED PROTUBERANCE *on the head of a bull, from whence his horns spring,*] alluded to in *The Winter's Tale;* whilst the imputation of impending danger to "*his* LUNES" (according to the other reading) answers as obviously to the jealous fury of the husband that thinks he has detected the infidelity of his wife. Thus, in *The Merry Wives of Windsor:* "Why, woman, your husband is in his old *lunes*—he so takes on yonder with my husband; so rails against all married mankind; so curses all Eve's daughters, and so buffets himself on the *forehead*, crying peer out! peer out! that any *madness*, I ever yet beheld, seem'd but tameness, civility, and patience, to this distemper he is now in."
Henley.

Shakspeare probably had here the following passage in *The Hystory of Hamblett*, bl. l. in his thoughts: "*Fengon* could not content himselfe, but still his minde gave him that the *foole* [*Hamlet*] would play him *some trick of legerdemaine.* And in that conceit seeking to be rid of him, determined to find the meanes

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To keep those many many bodies safe,
That live, and feed, upon your majesty.
Ros. The single and peculiar life is bound,
With all the strength and armour of the mind,
To keep itself from 'noyance; but much more
That spirit, upon whose weal[9] depend and rest
The lives of many. The cease of majesty
Dies not alone; but, like a gulph, doth draw
What 's near it, with it: it is a massy wheel,[1]
Fix'd on the summit of the highest mount,
To whose huge spokes ten thousand lesser things
Are mortis'd and adjoin'd; which, when it falls,
Each small annexment, petty consequence,
Attends the boist'rous ruin. Never alone
Did the king sigh, but with a general groan.
King. Arm you, I pray you, to this speedy voyage;
For we will fetters put upon this fear,
Which now goes too free-footed.
Ros. Guil. We will haste us.
[*Exeunt* Ros. *and* GUIL.

Enter POLONIUS.

Pol. My lord, he 's going to his mother's closet:
Behind the arras I 'll convey myself,[2]
To hear the process; I 'll warrant, she 'll tax him home:
And, as you said, and wisely was it said,
'Tis meet, that some more audience, than a mother,
Since nature makes them partial,[3] should o'erhear

to do it, by the aid of a stranger; making the king of England minister of his massacrous resolution, to whom he purposed to send him." *Malone.*

[9] *That spirit, upon whose* weal —] So the quarto. The folio gives—
That spirit, upon whose spirit ——. *Steevens.*

[1] —— *it is a massy wheel,*] Thus the folio. The quarto reads —Or *it is* &c. *Malone.*

[2] *Behind the arras I 'll convey myself,*] See Vol. VIII, p. 250, n. 9. *Steevens.*
The arras-hangings in Shakspeare's time, were hung at such a distance from the walls, that a person might easily stand behind them unperceived. *Malone.*

[3] *Since nature makes them partial,* &c.]
" —————— Matres omnes filiis
" In peccato adjutrices, auxilii in paterna injuria
" Solent esse ——." *Ter. Heaut.* Act V, sc. ii. *Steevens.*

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The speech, of vantage.[4] Fare you well, my liege:
I 'll call upon you ere you go to bed,
And tell you what I know.

King. Thanks, dear my lord. [*Exit* POL.

O, my offence is rank, it smells to heaven;
It hath the primal eldest curse upon 't,
A brother's murder!—Pray can I not,
Though inclination be as sharp as will;[5]
My stronger guilt defeats my strong intent;
And, like a man to double business bound,
I stand in pause where I shall first begin,
And both neglect. What if this cursed hand
Were thicker than itself with brother's blood?
Is there not rain enough in the sweet heavens,
To wash it white as snow? Whereto serves mercy,
But to confront the visage of offence?
And what 's in prayer, but this two-fold force,—
To be forestalled, ere we come to fall,
Or pardon'd, being down? Then I 'll look up;
My fault is past. But, O, what form of prayer
Can serve my turn? Forgive me my foul murder!—
That cannot be; since I am still possess'd
Of those effects for which I did the murder,
My crown, mine own ambition, and my queen.

[4] —— *of* vantage.] By some opportunity of secret observation. *Warburton.*

[5] *Though inclination be as sharp as* will;] Dr. Warburton would read:

Though inclination be as sharp as th' ill.

The old reading is—as sharp *as will.* *Steevens.*

I have followed the easier emendation of Mr. Theobald, received by Sir T. Hanmer: i. e. as *'twill.* *Johnson.*

Will is *command, direction.* Thus, *Ecclesiasticus,* xliii, 16: "— and at his *will* the south wind bloweth." The King says, his mind is in too great confusion to pray, even though his *inclination* were as strong as the *command* which requires that duty. *Steevens.*

What the King means to say, is, "That though he was not only *willing* to pray, but strongly *inclined* to it, yet his intention was defeated by his guilt.

The distinction I have stated between *inclination* and *will,* is supported by the following passage in the *Laws of Candy,* where Philander says to Erato:

"I have a *will,* I 'm sure, howe'er my heart
"May play the coward." *M. Mason.*

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May one be pardon'd, and retain the offence?[6]
In the corrupted currents of this world,
Offence's gilded hand may shove by justice;
And oft 'tis seen, the wicked prize itself
Buys out the law: But 'tis not so above:
There is no shuffling, there the action lies
In his true nature; and we ourselves compell'd,
Even to the teeth and forehead of our faults,
To give in evidence. What then? what rests?
Try what repentance can: What can it not?
Yet what can it, when one can not repent?[7]
O wretched state! O bosom, black as death!
O limed soul;[8] that struggling to be free,
Art more engag'd! Help, angels, make assay!
Bow, stubborn knees! and, heart, with strings of steel,
Be soft as sinews of the new-born babe;
All may be well! [*Retires, and kneels.*

Enter HAMLET.

Ham. Now might I do it, pat, now he is praying;[9]
And now I 'll do 't;—and so he goes to heaven:
And so am I reveng'd? That would be scann'd:[1]
A villain kills my father; and, for that,
I, his sole son, do this same villain send[2]

[6] *May one be pardon'd, and retain the* offence?] He that does not amend what can be amended, *retains* his *offence*. The King kept the crown from the right heir. *Johnson.*

A similar passage occurs in *Philaster*, where the King, who had usurped the crown of Sicily, and is praying to heaven for forgiveness, says:

"——— But how can I
"Look to be heard of gods, that must be just,
"Praying upon the ground I hold by wrong?" *M. Mason.*

[7] *Yet what can it, when one* can not *repent?*] *What can* repentance *do for a man that cannot be* penitent, for a man who has only part of penitence, distress of conscience, without the other part, resolution of amendment? *Johnson.*

[8] *O* limed *soul;*] This alludes to *bird-lime*. Shakspeare uses the same word again, in *King Henry VI*, P. II:

"Madam, myself have *lim'd* a bush for her." *Steevens.*

[9] ——— pat, *now he is praying;*] Thus the folio. The quartos read—*but* now, &c. *Steevens.*

[1] ——— *That would be scann'd:*] i. e. that should be considered, estimated. *Steevens.*

[2] *I, his* sole *son, do this same villain send* —] The folio reads

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To heaven.
Why, this is hire and salary,[3] not revenge.
He took my father grossly, full of bread;
With all his crimes broad blown,[4] as flush as May;
And, how his audit stands, who knows, save heaven?[5]
But, in our circumstance and course of thought,
'Tis heavy with him: And am I then reveng'd,
To take him in the purging of his soul,
When he is fit and season'd for his passage?
No.
Up, sword; and know thou a more horrid hent:[6]
When he is drunk, asleep, or in his rage;
Or in the incestuous pleasures of his bed;[7]
At gaming, swearing;[8] or about some act
That has no relish of salvation in 't:
Then trip him, that his heels may kick at heaven:[9]

—*foule* son, a reading apparently corrupted from the quarto. The meaning is plain. *I, his* only *son*, who am bound to punish his murderer. *Johnson.*

[3] —— hire *and* salary,] Thus the folio. The quartos read—*base* and *silly*. *Steevens.*

[4] *He took my father grossly*, full of bread;
With all his crimes broad blown,] The uncommon expression, *full of bread*, our poet borrowed from the sacred writings: "Behold, this was the iniquity of thy sister Sodom; pride, *fullness of bread*, and abundance of idleness was in her and in her daughters, neither did she strengthen the hand of the poor and needy." *Ezekiel*, xvi, 49. *Malone.*

[5] *And, how his audit stands, who knows, save heaven?*] As it appears from the Ghost's own relation that he was in *purgatory*, Hamlet's doubt could only be how long he had to continue there. *Ritson.*

[6] *Up, sword; and know thou a more horrid* hent:] To *hent* is used by Shakspeare for to *seize, to catch*, to *lay hold on*. *Hent* is, therefore, *hold*, or *seizure*. *Lay hold on* him, sword, at a more horrid time. *Johnson.*

[7] *When he is drunk, asleep, or in his rage;*
Or in the incestuous pleasures of his bed;] So, in Marston's *Insatiate Countess*, 1603:
"Didst thou not kill him drunk?
"Thou shouldst, or in th' embraces of his lust." *Steevens.*

[8] *At gaming, swearing;*] Thus the folio. The quarto, 1604, reads—At *game, a* swearing; &c. *Malone.*

[9] —— *that his heels may kick at heaven;*] So, in Heywood's *Silver Age*, 1613:

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And that his soul may be as damn'd, and black,
As hell, whereto it goes.[1] My mother stays:
This physick but prolongs thy sickly days. [*Exit.*

The King *rises, and advances.*

King. My words fly up, my thoughts remain below:
Words, without thoughts, never to heaven go. [*Exit.*

" Whose *heels tript* up, *kick'd gainst the firmament.*"
Steevens.

[1] *As hell, whereto it goes.*] This speech, in which Hamlet, represented as a virtuous character, is not content with taking blood for blood, but contrives damnation for the man that he would punish, is too horrible to be read or to be uttered. *Johnson.*

This speech of Hamlet's, as Johnson observes, is horrible indeed; yet some moral may be extracted from it, as all his subsequent calamities were owing to this savage refinement of revenge. *M. Mason.*

That a sentiment so infernal should have met with imitators, may excite surprize; and yet the same fiend-like disposition is shown by Lodowick, in Webster's *White Devil, or Vittoria Corombona,* 1612:

" ——— to have poison'd
" The handle of his racket. O, that, that!—
" That while he had been bandying at tennis,
" He might have sworn himself to hell, and struck
" *His soul* into the hazard!"

Again, in *The Honest Lawyer,* by S. S. 1616:

" I then should strike his body with his *soul,*
" And sink them both together."

Again, in the third of Beaumont and Fletcher's *Four Plays in One:*

" No; take him dead drunk now, *without repentance.*"
Steevens.

The same horrid thought has been adopted by Lewis Machin, in *The Dumb Knight,* 1633:

" Nay, but be patient, smooth your brow a little,
" And you shall take them as they clip each other;
" Even in the height of sin; then damn them both,
" And let them stink before they ask God pardon,
" That *your revenge may stretch unto their souls.*" *Malone.*

I think it not improbable, that when Shakspeare put this horrid sentiment into the mouth of Hamlet, he might have recollected the following story: " One of these monsters meeting his enemie unarmed, threatened to kill him, if he denied not God, his power, and essential properties, viz. his mercy, suffrance, &c. the which, when the other, desiring life, pronounced with great horror, kneeling upon his knees; the bravo cried out, *nowe will I kill thy body and soule,* and at that instant thrust him through with his rapier." *Brief Discourse of the Spanish State, with a Dialogue annexed intitled Philobasilis,* 4to. 1590, p. 24. *Reed.*

A similar story is told in *The Turkish Spy,* Vol. III, p. 243. *Malone.*

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SCENE IV.

Another Room in the same.

Enter Queen *and* POLONIUS.

Pol. He will come straight. Look, you lay home to him:
Tell him, his pranks have been too broad to bear with;
And that your grace hath screen'd and stood between
Much heat and him. I 'll silence me e'en here.[2]
Pray you, be round with him.[3]
Queen. I 'll warrant you;
Fear me not:—withdraw, I hear him coming.
[POL. *hides himself.*[4]

Enter HAMLET.

Ham. Now, mother; what 's the matter?
Queen. Hamlet, thou hast thy father much offended.
Ham. Mother, you have my father much offended.
Queen. Come, come, you answer with an idle tongue.
Ham. Go, go, you question with a wicked tongue.
Queen. Why, how now, Hamlet?
Ham. What 's the matter now?
Queen. Have you forgot me?
Ham. No, by the rood, not so:
You are the queen, your husband's brother's wife;

[2] —— *I 'll silence me e'en here.*] *I 'll* silence *me even here,* is, *I 'll use no more words. Johnson.*

[3] —— *be round with him.*] Here the folio interposes, improperly, I think, the following speech:
" Ham. [*Within.*] Mother, mother, mother." *Steevens.*

[4] Polonius *hides himself.*] The concealment of Polonius in the Queen's chamber, during the conversation between Hamlet and his mother, and the manner of his death, were suggested by the following passage in *The Hystory of Hamblett,* bl. l. sig. D 1: " The counsellour entered secretly into the queene's chamber, and there *hid himselfe behinde the arras,* and long before the queene and Hamlet came thither; who being craftie and politique, as soone as hee was within the chamber, doubting some treason, and fearing if he should speake severely and wisely to his mother, touching his secret practices, hee should be understood, and by that means intercepted, used his ordinary manner of dissimulation, and began to come [r. *crow*] like a cocke, beating with his arms (in such manner as cockes use to strike with their wings) upon the hangings of the chamber; whereby feeling something stirring under them, he cried, *a rat, a rat,* and pre-

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And,—'would it were not so![5]—you are my mother.
Queen. Nay, then I 'll set those to you that can speak.
Ham. Come, come, and sit you down; you shall not budge;
You go not, till I set you up a glass
Where you may see the inmost part of you.
Queen. What wilt thou do? thou wilt not murder me?
Help, help, ho!
Pol. [*behind*] What, ho! help!
Ham. How now! a rat?[6] [*Draws.*
Dead, for a ducat, dead.
[HAMLET *makes a pass through the Arras.*
Pol. [*behind*] O, I am slain. [*Falls, and dies.*
Queen. O me, what hast thou done?
Ham. Nay, I know not:
Is it the king? [*Lifts up the Arras, and draws forth* POL.
Queen. O, what a rash and bloody deed is this!
Ham. A bloody deed;—almost as bad, good mother,
As kill a king, and marry with his brother.
Queen. As kill a king![7]

sently drawing his sworde, thrust it into the hangings; which done; pulled the counsellour (half-deade) out by the heeles, made an ende of killing him; and, being slaine, cut his body in pieces, which he caused to be boyled, and then cast it into an open vault or privie." *Malone.*

[5] *And—'would it were not so!*] The folio reads—
But *would* you *were not so.* *Henderson.*

[6] *How now! a rat?*] This (as Dr. Farmer has observed) is an expression borrowed from *The History of Hamblet*, a translation from the French of Belleforest. *Steevens.*

[7] Queen. *As kill a king!*] This exclamation may be considered as some hint that the Queen had no hand in the murder of Hamlet's father. *Steevens.*

It has been doubted whether Shakspeare intended to represent the Queen as accessary to the murder of her husband. The surprize she here expresses at the charge seems to tend to her exculpation. Where the variation is not particularly marked, we may presume, I think, that the poet intended to tell his story as it had been told before. The following extract, therefore, from *The Hystory of Hamblett*, bl. l. relative to this point, will probably not be unacceptable to the reader: "Fengon [the king in the present play] boldened and encouraged by such impunitie, durst venture to couple himself in marriage with her, whom he used as his concubine during good Horvendille's life; in that sort

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Ham. Ay, lady, 'twas my word.—
Thou wretched, rash, intruding fool, farewel! [*To* POL.

spotting his name with a double vice, incestuous adulterie, and paracide murther.—This adulterer and infamous murtherer slaundered his dead brother, that he would have slaine his wife, and that hee by chance finding him on the point ready to do it, in defence of the lady, had slaine him.—The unfortunate and wicked woman that had received the honour to be the wife of one of the valiantest and wisest princes in the North, imbased herselfe in such vile sort as to falsifie her faith unto him, and, which is worse, to marrie him that had bin the tyrannous murtherer of her lawful husband; *which made diverse men think that she had been the causer of the murther*, thereby to live in her adulterie without controle." *Hyst. of Hamb.* sig. C 1. 2.

In the conference, however, with her son, on which the present scene is founded, she strongly asserts her innocence with respect to this fact:

"I know well, my sonne, that I have done thee great wrong in marrying with Fengon, the cruel tyrant and murtherer of thy father, and my loyal spouse; but when thou shalt consider the small means of resistance, and the treason of the palace, with the little cause of confidence we are to expect, or hope for, of the courtiers, all wrought to his will; as also the power he made ready if I should have refused to like him; thou wouldst rather excuse, than accuse me of lasciviousness or inconstancy, much less offer me that wrong *to suspect that ever thy mother* Geruth *ence consented to the death and murther of her husband:* swearing unto thee by the majestie of the gods, that if it had layne in me to have resisted the tyrant, although it had beene with the losse of my blood, yea and of my life, I would surely have saved the life of my lord and husband." *Ibid.* sig. D 4.

It is observable, that in the drama neither the king or queen make so good a defence. Shakspeare wished to render them as odious as he could, and therefore has not in any part of the play furnished them with even the semblance of an excuse for their conduct.

Though the inference already mentioned may be drawn from the surprize which our poet has here made the Queen express at being charged with the murder of her husband, it is observable that when the Player-Queen in the preceding scene says:

"In second husband let me be accurst!
"None wed the second, *but who kill'd the first.*"

he has made Hamlet exclaim—"*that's wormwood.*" The Prince, therefore, both from the expression and the words addressed to his mother in the present scene, must be supposed to think her guilty.—Perhaps after all this investigation, the truth is, that Shakspeare himself meant to leave the matter in doubt. *Malone.*

I know not in what part of this tragedy the King and Queen could have been expected to enter into a vindication of their mutual conduct. The former indeed is rendered contemptible as

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I took thee for thy better; take thy fortune:
Thou find'st, to be too busy, is some danger.—
Leave wringing of your hands: Peace; sit you down,
And let me wring your heart: for so I shall,
If it be made of penetrable stuff;
If damned custom have not braz'd it so,
That it be proof and bulwark against sense.

well as guilty; but for the latter our poet seems to have felt all that tenderness which the Ghost recommends to the imitation of her son. *Steevens.*

Had Shakspeare thought fit to have introduced the topicks I have suggested, can there be a doubt concerning his ability to introduce them? The king's justification, if to justify had been the poet's object, (which it certainly was not) might have been made in a soliloquy; the queen's, in the present interview with her son. *Malone.*

It might not unappositely be observed, that every new commentator, like Sir T. Hanmer's Othello, must often "*make* the meat he feeds on." Some slight objection to every opinion already offered, may be found; and, if in doubtful cases we are to presume that "the poet tells his stories as they have been told before," we must put new constructions on many of his scenes, as well as new comments on their verbal obscurities.

For instance—touching the manner in which Hamlet disposed of Polonius's body. The black-letter history tells us he "cut it in pieces, which he caused to be boiled, and then cast it into an open vault or privie." Are we to conclude therefore that he did so in the play before us, because our author has left the matter doubtful? Hamlet is only made to tell us, that this dead counsellor was "safely stowed." He afterwards adds, "—you shall *nose* him" &c.; all which might have been the case, had the direction of the aforesaid history been exactly followed. In this transaction then (which I call a doubtful one, because the remains of Polonius might have been rescued from the *forica*, and afterwards have received their "hugger-mugger" funeral,) am I at liberty to suppose he had the fate of Heliogabalus, *in cloacam missus?*

That the Queen (who may still be regarded as innocent of murder) might have offered some apology for her "over-hasty marriage," can easily be supposed; but Mr. Malone has not suggested what defence could have been set up by the royal fratricide. My acute predecessor, as well as the novelist, must have been aware that though female weakness, and an offence against the forms of the world, will admit of extenuation, such guilt as that of the usurper, could not have been palliated by the dramatick art of Shakspeare; even if the father of Hamlet had been represented as a wicked instead of a virtuous character.

Steevens.

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Queen. What have I done, that thou dar'st wag thy tongue
In noise so rude against me?
Ham. Such an act,
That blurs the grace and blush of modesty;
Calls virtue, hypocrite; takes off the rose[8]

[8] —— *takes off the* rose, *&c.*] Alluding to the custom of wearing roses on the side of the face. See a note on a passage in *King John*, Act I. *Warburton.*

I believe Dr. Warburton is mistaken; for it must be allowed that there is a material difference between an ornament worn on the *forehead*, and one exhibited on *the side of the face*. Some have understood these words to be only a metaphorical enlargement of the sentiment contained in the preceding line:

" —— blurs the grace and *blush* of modesty:"

but as the *forehead* is no proper situation for a *blush* to be displayed in, we may have recourse to another explanation.

It was once the custom for those who were betrothed, to wear some flower as an external and conspicuous mark of their mutual engagement. So, in Spenser's *Shepherd's Calendar for April:*

" Bring *coronations* and *sops in wine*,
" *Worn of paramours.*"

Lyte, in his *Herbal*, 1578, enumerates *sops in wine* among the smaller kind of single gilliflowers or pinks.

An Address " To all Judiciall Censurers," prefixed to *The Whipper of the Satyre his Pennance in a White Sheete, or the Beadle's Confutation*, 1601, begins thus:

" Brave spirited gentles, on whose comely *front*
" The *rose* of favour sits majesticall, —."

Sets a *blister* there, has the same meaning as in *Measure for Measure:*

" Who falling in the flaws of her own youth,
" Hath *blister'd* her report." *Steevens.*

I believe, by the *rose* was only meant the *roseate hue*. The forehead certainly appears to us an odd place for the hue of innocence to dwell on, but Shakspeare might place it there with as much propriety as a *smile*. In *Troilus and Cressida* we find these lines:

" So rich advantage of a promis'd glory,
" As *smiles* upon the *forehead* of this action."

That part of the forehead which is situated between the eyebrows, seems to have been considered by our poet as the seat of innocence and modesty. So, in a subsequent scene:

" ——— brands the harlot,
" Even here, between the *chaste* and unsmirch'd *brow*
" Of my true mother." *Malone.*

In the foregoing quotation from *Troilus and Cressida*, I understand that the *forehead* is *smiled upon by advantage*, and not that

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From the fair forehead of an innocent love,
And sets a blister there; makes marriage vows
As false as dicers' oaths: O, such a deed,
As from the body of contraction[9] plucks
The very soul; and sweet religion makes
A rhapsody of words: Heaven's face doth glow;
Yea, this solidity and compound mass,
With tristful visage, as against the doom,
Is thought-sick at the act.[1]

the *forehead is itself the smiler*. Thus, says Laertes in the play before us:

"Occasion *smiles upon* a second *leave*."

But it is not the *leave* that *smiles*, but *occasion* that *smiles upon it*.

In the subsequent passage our author had no choice; for having alluded to that part of the face which was anciently branded with a mark of shame, he was compelled to place his token of innocence in a corresponding situation. *Steevens*.

[9] —— *from the body of* contraction —] *Contraction* for *marriage contract*. *Warburton*.

[1] —— *Heaven's face doth glow;*
Yea, the solidity and compound mass,
With tristful visage, as against the doom,
Is thought-sick at the act.] If any sense can be found here, it is this. The sun glows [and does it not always?] and the very solid mass of earth has a tristful visage, and is thought-sick. All this is sad stuff. The old quarto reads much nearer to the poet's sense:

Heaven's face *does glow,*
O'er *this solidity and compound mass,*
With heated *visage, as against the doom,*
Is thought-sick at the act.

From whence it appears, that Shakspeare wrote,

Heaven's face doth glow,
O'er *this solidity and compound mass,*
With tristful visage; and, *as 'gainst the doom,*
Is thought-sick at the act.

This makes a fine sense, and to this effect. The sun looks upon our globe, the scene of this murder, with an angry and mournful countenance, half hid in eclipse, as at the day of doom. *Warburton*.

The word *heated*, though it agrees well enough with *glow*, is, I think, not so striking as *tristful*, which was, I suppose, chosen at the revisal. I believe the whole passage now stands as the author gave it. Dr. Warburton's reading restores two improprieties, which Shakspeare, by his alteration, had removed. In the first, and in the new reading, *Heaven's* face *glows with tristful* visage; and, *Heaven's face is* thought-sick. To the common reading there is no just objection. *Johnson*.

I am strongly inclined to think that the reading of the quarto,

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Queen. Ah me, what act,
That roars so loud,[2] and thunders in the index?[3]
Ham. Look here, upon this picture, and on this;[4]

1604, is the true one. In Shakspeare's licentious diction, the meaning may be,—The face of heaven doth glow with heated visage over the earth: *and heaven* as against the day of judgment, is thought-sick at the act.

Had not our poet St. Luke's description of the last day in his thoughts?—"And there shall be signs in the sun and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity, the sea and the waves roaring: men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking on those things which are coming on the earth; for the powers of heaven shall be shaken," &c. *Malone.*

[2] *That roars so loud,*] The meaning is,—*What is this act of* which the *discovery*, or *mention*, cannot be made, but with this violence of clamour? *Johnson.*

[3] —— *and thunders in the* index?] Mr. Edwards observes, that the *indexes* of many old books were at that time inserted at the beginning, instead of the end, as is now the custom. This observation I have often seen confirmed.

So, in *Othello*, Act II, sc. vii: "—— an *index* and obscure *prologue* to the history of lust and foul thoughts." *Steevens.*

Bullokar in his *Expositor*, 8vo. 1616, defines an *Index* by "A *table* in a booke." The *table* was almost always *prefixed* to the books of our poet's age. Indexes, in the sense in which we now understand the word, were very uncommon. *Malone.*

[4] *Look here, upon this picture, and on this;*] It is evident from the following words,

"*A station* like the herald Mercury," &c.

that these pictures which are introduced as miniatures on the stage, were meant for whole lengths, being part of the furniture of the Queen's closet:

"—— like Maia's son he stood,
"And shook his plumes." *Paradise Lost*, Book V.

Hamlet, who, in a former scene, has censured those who gave "forty, fifty, a hundred ducats apiece" for his uncle's "picture in little," would hardly have condescended to carry such a thing in his pocket. *Steevens.*

The introduction of miniatures in this place appears to be a modern innovation. A print prefixed to *Rowe's* edition of *Hamlet*, published in 1709, proves this. There, the two royal portraits are exhibited as half-lengths, hanging in the Queen's closet; and either thus, or as whole-lengths, they probably were exhibited from the time of the original performance of this tragedy to the death of Betterton. To half-lengths, however, the same objection lies, as to miniatures. *Malone.*

We may also learn, that from this print the trick of kicking the chair down on the appearance of the Ghost, was adopted by modern Hamlets from the practice of their predecessors. *Steevens.*

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The counterfeit presentment of two brothers.
See, what a grace was seated on this brow:
Hyperion's curls;[5] the front of Jove himself;
An eye like Mars, to threaten and command;
A station like the herald Mercury,[6]
New-lighted on a heaven-kissing hill;[7]

[5] Hyperion's *curls;*] It is observable, that *Hyperion* is used by Spenser with the same error in *quantity*. *Farmer*.

I have never met with an earlier edition of Marston's *Insatiate Countess* than that in 1613. In this the following lines occur, which bear a close resemblance to Hamlet's description of his father:

"A donative he hath of every god;
"*Apollo* gave him *locks*, *Jove* his high *front*."
"—— dignos et *Apolline crines*."

Ovid's *Metam.* B. III, thus translated by Golding, 1587:

"And haire that one might worthily Apollo's haire it deeme." *Steevens*.

[6] *A* station *like the herald* Mercury, *&c.*] *Station*, in this instance, does not mean *the spot where any one is placed*, but *the act of standing*. So, in *Antony and Cleopatra*, Act III, sc. iii:

"Her motion and her *station* are as one."

On turning to Mr. Theobald's first edition, I find that he had made the same remark, and supported it by the same instance. The observation is necessary, for otherwise the compliment designed to the attitude of the King, would be bestowed on the place where Mercury is represented as standing. *Steevens*.

In the first scene of *Timon of Athens*, the poet, admiring a picture, introduces the same image:

"—— How this *grace*
"Speaks his own *standing!*" *Malone*.

I think it not improbable that Shakspeare caught this image from Phaer's translation of Virgil, (Fourth *Æneid*,) a book that without doubt he had read:

"And now approaching neere, the top he seeth and mighty lims
"Of *Atlas*, *mountain tough*, that *heaven* on boyst'rous *shoulders beares*;—
"There *first* on ground with wings of might doth *Mercury* arrive,
"Then down from thence right over seas himselfe doth headlong drive."

In the margin are these words: "The description of *Mercury's* journey from *heaven*, along the *mountain* Atlas in Afrike, *highest* on earth." *Malone*.

[7] —— heaven-kissing *hill;*] So, in *Troilus and Cressida*:

"Yon towers whose wanton tops do *buss the clouds*."

Again, in Chapman's version of the fourteenth *Iliad*:

"A fir it was that shot past air, and *kiss'd* the burning *sky*." *Steevens*.

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A combination, and a form, indeed,
Where every god did seem to set his seal,
To give the world assurance of a man:
This was your husband.—Look you now, what follows:
Here is your husband; like a mildew'd ear,
Blasting his wholesome brother.[8] Have you eyes?
Could you on this fair mountain leave to feed,
And batten[9] on this moor? Ha! have you eyes?
You cannot call it, love: for, at your age,
The hey-day in the blood[1] is tame, it 's humble,
And waits upon the judgment; And what judgment
Would step from this to this? Sense, sure, you have,
Else, could you not have motion:[2] But, sure, that sense

[8] —— *like a* mildew'd ear,
Blasting *his wholesome brother.*] This alludes to *Pharaoh's Dream*, in the 41st chapter of *Genesis*. *Steevens.*

[9] —— *batten* —] i. e. to grow fat. So, in *Claudius Tiberius Nero*, 1607:
" ——— and for milk
" I *batten'd* was with blood."
Again, in Marlowe's *Jew of Malta*, 1633:
" —— make her round and plump,
" And *batten* more than you are aware."
Bat is an ancient word for *increase*. Hence the adjective *batful*, so often used by Drayton in his *Polyolbion*. *Steevens.*

[1] *The* hey-day *in the blood* —] This expression occurs in Ford's *'Tis Pity she 's a Whore*, 1633:
" ——— must
" The *hey-day* of your luxury be fed
" Up to a surfeit?" *Steevens.*

[2] —— *Sense, sure, you have,*
Else, could you not have motion:] But from what philosophy our editors learnt this, I cannot tell. Since *motion* depends so little upon *sense*, that the greatest part of *motion* in the universe, is amongst bodies devoid of *sense*. We should read:
Else, could you not have notion.
i. e. intellect, reason, &c. This alludes to the famous peripatetic principle of *Nil fit in* intellectu, *quod non fuerit in* sensu. And how fond our author was of applying, and alluding to, the principles of this philosophy, we have given several instances. The principle in particular has been since taken for the foundation of one of the noblest works that these latter ages have produced. *Warburton.*

The whole passage is wanting in the folio; and which soever of the readings be the true one, the poet was not indebted to this boasted philosophy for his choice. *Steevens.*

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Is apoplex'd: for madness would not err;
Nor sense to ecstasy was ne'er so thrall'd,
But it reserv'd some quantity of choice,
To serve in such a difference. What devil was 't,
That thus hath cozen'd you at hoodman-blind?[3]
Eyes without feeling,[4] feeling without sight,
Ears without hands or eyes, smelling sans all,
Or but a sickly part of one true sense
Could not so mope.[5]
O shame! where is thy blush? Rebellious hell,
If thou canst mutine in a matron's bones,[6]

Sense is sometimes used by Shakspeare for sensation or *sensual appetite;* as *motion* is the effect produced by the impulse of nature. Such, I think, is the signification of these words here. So, in *Measure for Measure:*

" —— she speaks, and 'tis
" Such sense, that my *sense* breeds with it."

Again, more appositely in the same play, where both the words occur:

" ——— One who never feels
" The wanton stings and *motions* of the *sense.*"

So, in Braithwaite's *Survey of Histories,* 1614: " These *continent* relations will reduce the straggling *motions* to a more settled and retired harbour."

Sense has already been used in this scene, for *sensation:*

" That it be proof and bulwark against *sense.*" *Malone.*

[3] —— *at* hoodman-blind?] This is, I suppose, the same as *blindman's-buff.* So, in *The Wise Woman of Hogsden,* 1638:

" Why should I play at *hood-man blind?*"

Again, in *Two Lamentable Tragedies in One, the One a Murder of Master Beech,* &c. 1601:

" Pick out men's eyes, and tell them that 's the sport
" Of *hood-man blind.*" *Steevens.*

[4] *Eyes without feeling,* &c.] This and the three following lines are omitted in the folio. *Steevens.*

[5] *Could not so* mope.] i. e. could not exhibit such marks of stupidity. The same word is used in *The Tempest,* sc. ult:

" And were brought *moping* hither." *Steevens.*

[6] —— Rebellious hell,
If thou canst mutine *in a matron's bones,* &c.] Thus the old copies. Shakspeare calls *mutineers,—mutines,* in a subsequent scene. *Steevens.*

So, in *Othello:*

" —— this hand of yours requires
" A sequester from liberty, fasting and prayer,
" Much castigation, exercise devout;
" For here 's a young and sweating *devil* here,
" That commonly *rebels.*"

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To flaming youth let virtue be as wax,
And melt in her own fire: proclaim no shame,
When the compulsive ardour gives the charge;
Since frost itself as actively doth burn,
And reason panders will.[7]

Queen. O Hamlet, speak no more!
Thou turn'st mine eyes into my very soul;
And there I see such black and grained[8] spots,
As will not leave their tinct.[9]

Ham. Nay, but to live
In the rank sweat of an enseamed bed;[1]

To *mutine*, for which the modern editors have substituted *mutiny*, was the ancient term, signifying to rise in *mutiny*. So, in Knolles's *History of the Turks*, 1603: "The Janisaries—became wonderfully discontented, and began to *mutine* in diverse places of the citie." *Malone.*

[7] —— *reason* panders *will.*] So the folio, I think, rightly; but the reading of the quarto is defensible:

——— *reason* pardons *will.* *Johnson.*

Panders was certainly Shakspeare's word. So, in *Venus and Adonis*:

"When *reason* is the *bawd* to *lust's abuse.*" *Malone.*

[8] —— *grained* —] Died in grain. *Johnson.*

I am not quite certain that the epithet—*grained*, is justly interpreted. Our author employs the same adjective in *The Comedy of Errors*:

"Though now this *grained* face of mine be hid," &c.

and in this instance the allusion is most certainly to the furrows in the *grain* of wood.

Shakspeare might therefore design the Queen to say, that her spots of guilt were not merely superficial, but indented.—A passage, however, in *Twelfth Night*, will sufficiently authorize Dr. Johnson's explanation: "'Tis *in grain*, sir, 'twill endure wind and weather." *Steevens.*

[9] *As will not* leave *their tinct.*] To *leave* is to part with, give up, resign. So, in *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*:

"It seems, you lov'd her not, to *leave* her token."

The quartos read:

As will leave there *their tinct.* *Steevens.*

[1] —— enseamed *bed;*] Thus the folio: i. e. *greasy* bed. *Johnson.*

Thus also the quarto, 1604. Beaumont and Fletcher use the word *inseamed* in the same sense, in the third of their *Four Plays in One*:

"His leachery *inseam'd* upon him."

In *The Book of Haukyng*, &c. bl. l. no date, we are told that "*Ensayme* of a hauke is *the grece.*"

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Stew'd in corruptions; honeying, and making love
Over the nasty stye; ——
Queen. O, speak to me no more;
These words, like daggers enter in mine ears;
No more, sweet Hamlet.
Ham. A murderer, and a villain?
A slave, that is not twentieth part the tythe
Of your precedent lord:—a vice of kings:[2]
A cutpurse of the empire and the rule;
That from a shelf the precious diadem stole,[3]
And put it in his pocket!
Queen. No more.

Enter Ghost.

Ham. A king
Of shreds and patches:[4] —
Save me, and hover o'er me with your wings,
You heavenly guards!—What would your gracious figure?
Queen. Alas, he 's mad.
Ham. Do you not come your tardy son to chide,

In Randle Holme's *Academy of Armory and Blazon*, B. II, ch. ii, p. 238, we are told that "*Enseame* is the purging of a hawk from her glut and grease." From the next page in the same work, we learn that the *glut* is "a slimy substance in the belly of the hawk."

In some places it means hogs' lard, in others, the grease or oil with which clothiers besmear their wool to make it draw out in spinning.

Incestuous is the reading of the quarto, 1611. *Steevens.*

In the West of England, the *inside fat* of a goose, when dissolved by heat, is called its *seam;* and Shakspeare has used the word in the same sense in his *Troilus and Cressida:*

"—— shall the proud lord,
"That bastes his arrogance with his own *seam*." *Henley.*

[2] —— *vice of kings:*] A low mimick of kings. The vice is the fool of a farce; from whence the modern *punch* is descended. *Johnson.*

[3] *That from a shelf* &c.] This is said not unmeaningly, but to show, that the usurper came not to the crown by any glorious villany, that carried danger with it, but by the low cowardly theft of a common pilferer. *Warburton.*

[4] *A king*
Of shreds and patches:] This is said, pursuing the idea of the *vice of kings.* The *vice* was dressed as a fool, in a coat of party-coloured patches. *Johnson.*

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That, lap'sd in time and passion,[5] lets go by
The important acting of your dread command?
O, say!

Ghost. Do not forget: This visitation
Is but to whet thy almost blunted purpose.
But, look! amazement on thy mother sits:
O, step between her and her fighting soul;
Conceit in weakest bodies strongest works;[6]
Speak to her, Hamlet.

Ham. How is it with you, lady?

Queen. Alas, how is 't with you?
That you do bend your eye on vacancy,
And with the incorporal air do hold discourse?
Forth at your eyes your spirits wildly peep;
And, as the sleeping soldiers in the alarm,
Your bedded hair, like life in excrements,[7]
Starts up, and stands on end. O gentle son,
Upon the heat and flame of thy distemper
Sprinkle cool patience.[8] Whereon do you look?

[5] —— *laps'd in time and passion,*] That, having suffered *time* to *slip*, and *passion* to *cool*, *lets go* &c. *Johnson.*

[6] Conceit *in weakest bodies strongest works;*] *Conceit* for *imagination.*

So, in *The Rape of Lucrece:*

" And the *conceited* painter was so nice. *Malone.*

See *Romeo and Juliet*, Act II, sc. vi. *Steevens.*

[7] —— *like life in* excrements,] The hairs are excrementitious, that is, without life or sensation; yet those very hairs, as if they had life, start up, &c. *Pope.*

So, in *Macbeth:*

" The time has been ——
" ———— my fell of *hair*,
" Would at a dismal treatise *rouse and stir*,
" *As life were in 't.*" *Malone.*

Not only the hair of animals having neither life nor sensation was called an *excrement*, but the feathers of birds had the same appellation. Thus, in Izaac Walton's *Complete Angler*, P. I, c. i, p. 9, edit. 1766: " I will not undertake to mention the several kinds of fowl by which this is done, and his curious palate pleased by day; and which, with their very *excrements*, afford him a soft lodging at night." *Whalley.*

[8] *Upon the heat and flame of thy distemper*
Sprinkle cool patience.] This metaphor seems to have been suggested by an old black letter novel, (already quoted in a note on *The Merchant of Venice*, Act III, sc. ii,) Green's *History of the fair Bellora:* " Therefore slake the burning *heate* of thy *flaming* affections, with some drops of *coaling* moderation." *Steevens.*

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Ham. On him! on him!—Look you, how pale he glares!
His form and cause conjoin'd, preaching to stones,[9]
Would make them capable.[1]—Do not look upon me;
Lest, with this piteous action, you convert
My stern effects:[2] then what I have to do
Will want true colour; tears, perchance, for blood.
Queen. To whom do you speak this?
Ham. Do you see nothing there?
Queen. Nothing at all; yet all, that is, I see.
Ham. Nor did you nothing hear?
Queen. No, nothing, but ourselves.
Ham. Why, look you there! look, how it steals away!
My father, in his habit as he liv'd![3]
Look, where he goes, even now, out at the portal!
[*Exit* Ghost.
Queen. This is the very coinage of your brain:
This bodiless creation ecstasy
Is very cunning in.[4]

[9] —— *preaching to stones* —] Thus, in Sidney's *Arcadia*, Lib. V: "Their passions then so swelling in them, they would have made *auditors of stones*, rather than" &c. *Steevens.*

[1] *His form and cause conjoin'd, preaching to stones,*
Would make them capable.] *Capable* here signifies *intelligent*; endued with understanding. So, in *King Richard III*:
"—— O, 'tis a parlous boy,
"Bold, quick, ingenious, forward, *capable*."
We yet use *capacity* in this sense. See also Vol. XI, p. 334, n. 9. *Malone.*

[2] *My stern* effects:] *Effects* for actions; deeds *effected*. *Malone.*

[3] *My father, in his habit as he liv'd!*] If the poet means by this expression, that his father appeared in his own *familiar habit*, he has either forgot that he had originally introduced him in *armour*, or must have meant to vary his dress at this his last appearance. Shakspeare's difficulty might perhaps be a little obviated by pointing the line thus:
My father—in his habit—as he liv'd! Steevens.
A man's armour, who is used to wear it, may be called his *habit*, as well as any other kind of clothing. *As he lived*, probably means—"as if he were alive—as if he lived." *M. Mason.*
As if is frequently so used in these plays; but this interpretation does not entirely remove the difficulty which has been stated. *Malone.*

[4] *This is the very* coinage *of your* brain:
This bodiless creation *ecstacy*
Is very cunning in.] So, in *The Rape of Lucrece*:
"Such *shadows* are the weak *brain's forgeries*." *Malone.*

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Ham. Ecstasy!
My pulse, as yours, doth temperately keep time,
And makes as healthful musick: It is not madness,
That I have utter'd: bring me to the test,
And I the matter will re-word; which madness
Would gambol from. Mother, for love of grace,
Lay not that flattering unction to your soul,
That not your trespass, but my madness, speaks:
It will but skin and film the ulcerous place;[5]
Whiles rank corruption, mining all within,
Infects unseen. Confess yourself to heaven;
Repent what 's past; avoid what is to come;
And do not spread the compost on the weeds,[6]
To make them ranker. Forgive me this my virtue:
For, in the fatness of these pursy times,
Virtue itself of vice must pardon beg;
Yea, curb[7] and woo, for leave to do him good.

Queen. O Hamlet! thou hast cleft my heart in twain.

Ham. O, throw away the worser part of it,
And live the purer with the other half.
Good night: but go not to my uncle's bed;
Assume a virtue, if you have it not.
That monster, custom, who all sense doth eat
Of habit's devil, is angel yet in this;[8]

Ecstasy in this place, and many others, means a temporary alienation of mind, a fit. So, in *Eliosto Libidinoso*, a novel, by John Hinde, 1606: "—— that bursting out of an *ecstasy* wherein she had long stood, like one beholding Medusa's head, lamenting" &c. *Steevens.*

See Vol. VII, p. 135, n. 6. *Malone.*

[5] —— skin *and film the ulcerous place;*] The same indelicate allusion occurs in *Measure for Measure:*

"That *skins* the vice o' the top." *Steevens.*

[6] —— *do not spread the compost* &c.] Do not, by any new indulgence, heighten your former offences. *Johnson.*

[7] —— *curb* —] That is, *bend* and *truckle*, Fr. *courber*. So, in *Pierce Plowman:*

"Then I *courbid* on my knees," &c. *Steevens.*

[8] *That monster, custom, who all sense doth eat*
Of *habit's* devil, *is angel yet in this.*] This passage is left out in the two elder folios: it is certainly corrupt, and the players did the discreet part to stifle what they did not understand. *Habit's devil* certainly arose from some conceited tamperer with the text, who thought it was necessary, in contrast to *angel*. The emendation in my text I owe to the sagacity of Dr. Thirlby:

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That to the use of actions fair and good
He likewise gives a frock, or livery,
That aptly is put on: Refrain to-night;
And that shall lend a kind of easiness
To the next abstinence: the next more easy:[9]
For use almost can change the stamp of nature,
And either curb the devil, or throw him out[1]
With wondrous potency. Once more, good night!
And when you are desirous to be bless'd,
I 'll blessing beg of you.—For this same lord,
[*Pointing to* POL.
I do repent; But heaven hath pleas'd it so,—
To punish me with this, and this with me,[2]

That monster, custom, who all sense doth eat
Of habits evil, *is angel* &c. *Theobald.*

I think Thirlby's conjecture wrong, though the succeeding editors have followed it; *angel* and *devil* are evidently opposed. *Johnson.*

I incline to think with Dr. Thirlby; though I have left the text undisturbed. From *That monster* to *put on*, is not in the folio. *Malone.*

I would read—*Or* habit's devil. The poet first styles *custom* a *monster*, and may aggravate and amplify his description by adding, that it is the "dæmon who presides over habit."—That monster custom, or habit's devil, is yet an angel in this particular. *Steevens.*

[9] —— *the next more easy:*] This passage, as far as *potency*, is omitted in the folio. *Steevens.*

[1] *And either* curb *the devil*, &c.] In the quarto, where alone this passage is found, some word was accidentally omitted at the press in the line before us. The quarto, 1604, reads:

And either the devil, or throw him out &c.

For the insertion of the word *curb* I am answerable. The printer or corrector of a later quarto, finding the line nonsense, omitted the word *either*, and substituted *master* in its place. The modern editors have accepted the substituted word, and yet retain *either*; by which the metre is destroyed. The word omitted in the first copy was undoubtedly a monosyllable. *Malone.*

This very rational conjecture may be countenanced by the same expression in *The Merchant of Venice:*

"And *curb* this cruel *devil* of his will." *Steevens.*

[2] *To punish me with this, and this with me,*] To punish me by making me the instrument of this man's death, and to punish this man by my hand. For this, the reading of both the quarto and folio, Sir T. Hanmer and the subsequent editors have substituted—

To punish *him with me, and me with him.* *Malone.*

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That I must be their scourge and minister.
I will bestow him, and will answer well
The death I gave him. So, again, good night!—
I must be cruel, only to be kind:[3]
Thus bad begins, and worse remains behind.—
But one word more, good lady.[4]

Queen. What shall I do?

Ham. Not this, by no means, that I bid you do:
Let the bloat king[5] tempt you again to bed;
Pinch wanton on your cheek; call you, his mouse;[6]
And let him, for a pair of reechy kisses,[7]

I take leave to vindicate the last editor of the octavo Shakspeare from any just share in the foregoing accusation. Whoever looks into the edition 1785, will see the line before us printed exactly as in this and Mr. Malone's text.—In several preceding instances a similar censure on the same gentleman has been as undeservedly implied. *Steevens.*

[3] *I must be* cruel, *only to be* kind:] This sentiment resembles the—*facto pius, et sceleratus eodem,* of Ovid's *Metamorphoses,* B. III. It is thus translated by Golding:

"For which he might both justly *kinde,* and *cruel* called bee." *Steevens.*

[4] But *one word more,* &c.] This passage I have restored from the quartos. For the of sake metre, however, I have supplied the conjunction—*But* *Steevens.*

[5] *Let the* bloat *king* —] i. e. the swollen king. *Bloat* is the reading of the quarto, 1604. *Malone.*

This again hints at his intemperance. He had already drank himself into a dropsy. *Blackstone.*

The folio reads—*blunt* king. *Henderson.*

[6] —— *his* mouse;] *Mouse* was once a term of endearment. So, in Warner's *Albion's England,* 1602, B. II, ch. xvi:

"God bless thee *mouse,* the bridegroom said," &c.

Again, in the *Menæchmi,* 1595: "Shall I tell thee, sweet *mouse?* I never look upon thee, but I am quite out of love with my wife." *Steevens.*

This term of endearment is very ancient, being found in *A new and merry interlude, called the Trial of Treasure,* 1567:

"*My mouse,* my nobs, my cony sweete;
"My hope and joye, my whole delight." *Malone.*

[7] —— reechy *kisses,*] *Reechy* is smoky. The author meant to convey a coarse idea, and was not very scrupulous in his choice of an epithet. The same, however, is applied with greater propriety to the neck of a cook-maid in *Coriolanus.* Again, in *Hans Beer Pot's Invisible Comedy,* 1618:

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Or padling in your neck with his damn'd fingers,
Make you to ravel all this matter out,
That I essentially am not in madness,
But mad in craft.[8] **'Twere good, you let him know:**

" ——————— bade him go
" And wash his face, he look'd so *reechily*,
" Like bacon hanging on the chimney's roof." *Steevens.*

Reechy properly means *steaming with exudation*, and seems to have been selected, to convey, in this place, its grossest import. *Henley.*

Reechy includes, I believe, *heat* as well as smoke. The verb to *reech*, which was once common, was certainly a corruption of —to *reek*. In a former passage Hamlet has remonstrated with his mother, on her living—

" In the *rank sweat* of an enseamed bed." *Malone.*

Reeky most certainly was not designed by our author to convey the idea of *heat*, being employed by him in *Romeo and Juliet*, to signify the *chill damp* of human bones in a sepulchre:

" —— *reeky* shanks, and yellow chapless sculls." *Steevens.*

[8] *That I essentially am not in madness,*
But mad in craft.] The reader will be pleased to see Dr. Farmer's extract from the old quarto *Historie of Hamblett*, of which he had a fragment only in his possession:—" It was not without cause, and just occasion, that my gestures, countenances, and words, seeme to proceed from a madman, and that I desire to haue all men esteeme mee wholly depriued of sense and reasonable understanding, bycause I am well assured, that he that hath made no conscience to kill his owne brother, (accustomed to murthers, and allured with desire of gouernement without controll in his treasons) will not spare to saue himselfe with the like crueltie, in the blood and flesh of the loyns of his brother, by him massacred; and therefore it is better for me to fayne madnesse, then to use my right sences as nature hath bestowed them upon me. The bright shining clearnes thereof I am forced to hide vnder this shadow of dissimulation, as the sun doth hir beams under some great cloud, when thewether in summer-time ouercasteth: the face of a madman serueth to couer my gallant countenance, and the gestures of a fool are fit for me, to the end that, guiding myself wisely therein, I may preserue my life for the Danes and the memory of my late deceased father; for that the desire of reuenging his death is so ingraven in my heart, that if I dye not shortly, I hope to take such and so great vengeance, that these countryes shall for euer speake thereof. Neuerthelesse I must stay the time, meanes, and occasion, lest by making ouergreat hast, I be now the cause of mine own sodaine ruine and ouerthrow, and by that meanes end, before I beginne to effect my hearts desire: hee that hath to doe with a wicked, disloyall, cruell, and discourteous man, must vse craft, and politike inuentions, such as a fine witte can best imagine, not to discover his interprise; for seeing that by force I cannot effect my desire,

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For who, that 's but a queen, fair, sober, wise,
Would from a paddock, from a bat, a gib,[9]
Such dear concernings hide? who would do so?
No, in despite of sense, and secrecy,
Unpeg the basket on the house's top,
Let the birds fly;[1] and, like the famous ape,
To try conclusions,[2] in the basket creep,
And break your own neck down.

Queen. Be thou assur'd, if words be made of breath,
And breath of life, I have no life to breathe
What thou hast said to me.

Ham. I must to England;[3] you know that?

Queen. Alack,
I had forgot; 'tis so concluded on.

Ham. There 's letters seal'd:[4] and my two school-fellows,—

reason alloweth me by dissimulation, subtiltie, and secret practices to proceed therein." *Steevens.*

[9] —— *a* gib,] So, in Drayton's *Epistle from Elinor Cobham to Duke Humphrey:*

"And call me beldam, *gib*, witch, night-mare, trot."

Gib was a common name for a cat. So, in Chaucer's *Romaunt of the Rose*, ver. 6204:

"—————— *gibbe* our cat,
"That waiteth mice and rats to killen." *Steevens.*

[1] *Unpeg the basket on the house's top,*
Let the birds fly;] Sir John Suckling, in one of his letters, may possibly allude to the same story: "It is the story of the *jackanapes* and the partridges; thou starest after a beauty till it be lost to thee, and then let'st out another, and starest after that till it is gone too." *Warner.*

[2] *To try conclusions,*] i. e. experiments. See Vol. IV, p. 336, n. 3. *Steevens.*

[3] *I must to England;*] Shakspeare does not inform us how Hamlet came to know that he was to be sent to England. Rosencrantz and Guildenstern were made acquainted with the King's intentions for the first time in the very last scene; and they do not appear to have had any communication with the Prince since that time. Add to this, that in a subsequent scene, when the King, after the death of Polonius, informs Hamlet he was to go to England, he expresses great surprize, as if he had not heard any thing of it before.—This last, however, may, perhaps, be accounted for, as contributing to his design of passing for a madman. *Malone.*

[4] *There 's letters seal'd:* &c.] The nine following verses are added out of the old edition. *Pope.*

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Whom I will trust, as I will adders fang'd,[5]—
They bear the mandate; they must sweep my way,[6]
And marshal me to knavery: Let it work;
For 'tis the sport, to have the engineer
Hoist[7] with his own petar: and it shall go hard,
But I will delve one yard below their mines,
And blow them at the moon: O, 'tis most sweet,
When in one line two crafts directly meet.[8]—
This man shall set me packing.
I 'll lug the guts into the neighbour room:[9]—
Mother, good night.—Indeed, this counsellor
Is now most still, most secret, and most grave,
Who was in life a foolish prating knave.
Come, sir, to draw toward an end with you:[1]—
Good night, mother.

[*Exeunt severally;* HAM. *dragging in* POL.

[5] —— *adders* fang'd,] That is, adders with their *fangs* or *poisonous teeth*, undrawn. It has been the practice of mountebanks to boast the efficacy of their antidotes by playing with vipers, but they first disabled their fangs. *Johnson.*

[6] —— *they must sweep my way*, &c.] This phrase occurs again in *Antony and Cleopatra:*

" —— some friends, that will
" *Sweep your way* for you." *Steevens.*

[7] *Hoist* &c.] *Hoist*, for *hoised;* as *past*, for *passed.* *Steevens.*

[8] *When in* one line *two crafts directly meet.*] Still alluding to a *countermine.* *Malone.*

The same expression has already occurred in *K. John*, Act IV, speech ult:

" Now powers from home, and discontents at home,
" *Meet in one line.*" *Steevens.*

[9] *I 'll lug the* guts *into the neighbour room:*] A line somewhat similar occurs in *King Henry VI*, P. III:

" I 'll throw thy body in another room, ——."

The word *guts* was not anciently so offensive to delicacy as it is at present; but was used by Lyly (who made the *first* attempt to polish our language) in his serious compositions. So, in his *Mydas*, 1592: " Could not the treasure of Phrygia, nor the tributes of Greece, nor mountains in the East, whose *guts* are gold, satisfy thy mind?" In short, *guts* was used where we now use *entrails.* Stanyhurst often has it in his translation of Virgil, 1582:

Pectoribus inhians spirantia consulit exta.

" She weenes her fortune by *guts* hoate smoakye to conster."

Again, in Chapman's version of the sixth *Iliad:*

" —— in whose *guts* the king of men imprest
" His ashen lance; —." *Steevens.*

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ACT IV[2]..... SCENE I.

The same.

Enter King, Queen, ROSENCRANTZ, *and* GUILDENSTERN.

King. There 's matter in these sighs; these profound heaves;
You must translate: 'tis fit we understand them:
Where is your son?

Queen. Bestow this place on us a little while.[3]—
[*To* Ros. *and* GUIL. *who go out.*
Ah, my good lord,[4] what have I seen to-night!

King. What, Gertrude? How does Hamlet?

Queen. Mad as the sea, and wind, when both contend[5]
Which is the mightier: In his lawless fit,
Behind the arras hearing something stir,
Whips out his rapier, cries, *A rat! a rat!*
And, in this brainish apprehension, kills
The unseen good old man.

King. O heavy deed!
It had been so with us, had we been there:
His liberty is full of threats to all;
To you yourself, to us, to every one.
Alas! how shall this bloody deed be answer'd?
It will be laid to us, whose providence

[1] *Come, sir, to draw toward an end with you:*] Shakspeare has been unfortunate in his management of the story of this play, the most striking circumstances of which arise so early in its formation, as not to leave him room for a conclusion suitable to the importance of its beginning. After this last interview with the Ghost, the character of Hamlet has lost all its consequence. *Steevens.*

[2] *Act IV.*] This play is printed in the old editions without any separation of the acts. The division is modern and arbitrary; and is here not very happy, for the pause is made at a time when there is more continuity of action than in almost any other of the scenes. *Johnson.*

[3] *Bestow this place on us a little while.*] This line is wanting in the folio. *Steevens.*

[4] —— my good *lord,*] The quartos read—*mine own* lord. *Steevens.*

[5] *Mad as the sea, and wind, when both contend* &c.] We have precisely the same image in *King Lear,* expressed with more brevity:

" —— he was met even now,
" *As mad as the* VEX'D *sea.*" *Malone.*

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Should have kept short, restrain'd, and out of haunt,[6]
This mad young man: but, so much was our love,
We would not understand what was most fit;
But, like the owner of a foul disease,
To keep it from divulging, let it feed
Even on the pith of life. Where is he gone?

Queen. To draw apart the body he hath kill'd:
O'er whom his very madness, like some ore,[7]
Among a mineral of metals base,
Shows itself pure; he weeps for what is done.

King. O, Gertrude, come away!
The sun no sooner shall the mountains touch,
But we will ship him hence: and this vile deed
We must, with all our majesty and skill,
Both countenance and excuse.—Ho! Guildenstern!

Enter ROSENCRANTZ *and* GUILDENSTERN.

Friends both, go join you with some further aid:
Hamlet in madness hath Polonius slain,
And from his mother's closet hath he dragg'd him:
Go, seek him out; speak fair, and bring the body
Into the chapel. I pray you, haste in this.

[*Exeunt* ROS. *and* GUIL.

Come, Gertrude, we 'll call up our wisest friends;
And let them know, both what we mean to do,

[6] —— *out of* haunt,] I would rather read— *out of* harm. *Johnson.*

Out of haunt, means, out of company. So, in *Antony and Cleopatra:*

"Dido and her Sichæus shall want troops,
"And all the *haunt* be ours."

Again, in Warner's *Albion's England*, 1602, B. V, ch. xxvi:

"And from the smith of heaven's wife allure the amorous *haunt*."

The place where men assemble, is often poetically called the *haunt of men*. So, in *Romeo and Juliet:*

"We talk here in the publick *haunt* of men." *Steevens.*

[7] —— *like some* ore,] Shakspeare seems to think *ore* to be *or*, that is, gold. Base metals have *ore* no less than precious. *Johnson.*

Shakspeare uses the general word *ore* to express *gold*, because it was the most excellent of ores.—I suppose we should read "of *metal* base" instead of *metals*, which much improves the construction of the passage. *M. Mason.*

He has perhaps used *ore* in the same sense in his *Rape of Lucrece:*

"When beauty boasted blushes, in despite
"Virtue would stain that *ore* with silver white."

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And what 's untimely done: so, haply, slander,[8]—
Whose whisper o'er the world's diameter,
As level as the cannon to his blank,[9]
Transports his poison'd shot,—may miss our name,
And hit the woundless air.[1]—O, come away!
My soul is full of discord, and dismay. [*Exeunt.*

A *mineral* Minsheu defines in his *Dictionary*, 1617: "Any thing that grows in mines, and *contains metals*." Shakspeare seems to have used the word in this sense,—for *a rude mass of metals*. In Bullokar's *English Expositor*, 8vo. 1616, *Mineral* is defined, "*mettall, or any thing digged out of the earth*." *Malone.*

Minerals are *mines*. So, in *The Golden Remains* of Hales of Eton, 1693, p. 34: "Controversies of the times, like spirits in the *minerals*, with all their labour, nothing is done."

Again, in Hall's *Virgidemiarum*, Lib. VI:

"Shall it not be a wild fig in a wall,
"Or fired brimstone in a *minerall?*" *Steevens.*

[8] —— *so, haply, slander*, &c.] Neither these words, nor the following three lines and an half, are in the folio. In the quarto, 1604, and all the subsequent quartos, the passage stands thus:

"—— And what 's untimely done.
"Whose whisper o'er the world's diameter," &c.

the compositor having omitted the latter part of the first line, as in a former scene, (see p. 154, n. 9,) a circumstance which gives additional strength to an observation made on *Antony and Cleopatra*, Act V, sc. i, Vol. XIII. Mr. Theobald supplied the *lacuna* by reading,—*For haply* slander, &c. *So* appears to me to suit the context better; for these lines are rather in apposition with those immediately preceding, than an illation from them. Mr. M Mason, I find, has made the same observation.

Shakspeare, as Theobald has observed, again expatiates on the diffusive power of slander, in *Cymbeline*:

"—— No, 'tis *slander*;
"Whose edge is sharper than the sword, whose tongue
"Out-*venoms* all the worms of Nile, whose breath
"Rides on the posting winds, and doth bely
"All corners of the world." *Malone.*

Mr. Malone reads—So *viperous* slander. *Steevens.*

[9] —— *cannon to his* blank,] The *blank* was the white mark at which shot or arrows were directed. So, in *King Lear*:

"—— let me still remain
"The true *blank* of thine eye." *Steevens.*

[1] —— *the* woundless air.] So, in a former scene:

"It is as *the air invulnerable*." *Malone.*

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SCENE II.

Another Room in the same.

Enter HAMLET.

Ham.——Safely stowed,—[*Ros. &c. within.* Hamlet! lord Hamlet!] But soft,[2]—what noise? who calls on Hamlet? O, here they come.

Enter ROSENCRANTZ *and* GUILDENSTERN.

Ros. What have you done, my lord, with the dead body?

Ham. Compounded it with dust,[3] whereto 'tis kin.

Ros. Tell us where 'tis; that we may take it thence, And bear it to the chapel.

Ham. Do not believe it.

Ros. Believe what?

Ham. That I can keep your counsel, and not mine own. Besides, to be demanded of a sponge!—what replication should be made by the son of a king?

Ros. Take you me for a sponge, my lord?

Ham. Ay, sir; that soaks up the king's countenance, his rewards, his authorities. But such officers do the king best service in the end: He keeps them, like an ape,[4] in the corner of his jaw; first mouthed, to be last

[2] —— *But soft.*] I have added these two words from the quarto, 1604. *Steevens.*

The folio reads:

"*Ham.* Safely stowed.

"*Ros.* &c. *within.* Hamlet! lord Hamlet.

"*Ham.* What noise," &c.

In the quarto, 1604, the speech stands thus:

"*Ham.* Safely stowed; but soft, what noise? who calls on Hamlet?" &c.

I have therefore printed Hamlet's speech unbroken, and inserted that of Rosencrantz, &c. from the folio, before the words, *but soft*, &c. In the modern editions Hamlet is made to take notice of the noise made by the courtiers, before he has heard it. *Malone.*

[3] *Compounded it with dust,*] So, in *King Henry IV*, P. II:

"Only *compound* me *with* forgotten *dust.*"

Again, in our poet's 71st Sonnet:

"When I perhaps *compounded* am *with clay.*" *Malone.*

[4] —— *like an* ape,] The quarto has *apple*, which is generally followed. The folio has *ape*, which Sir T. Hanmer has received, and illustrated with the following note:

"It is the way of monkeys in eating, to throw that part of their food, which they take up first, into a pouch they are pro-

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swallowed: When he needs what you have gleaned, it is but squeezing you, and, sponge, you shall be dry again.[5]

Ros. I understand you not, my lord.

Ham. I am glad of it: A knavish speech sleeps in a foolish ear.[6]

Ros. My lord, you must tell us where the body is, and go with us to the king.

vided with on each side of their jaw, and there they keep it, till they have done with the rest." *Johnson.*

Surely this should be "like an *ape*, an *apple*." *Farmer.*

The reading of the folio, *like an ape*, I believe to be the true one, because Shakspeare has the same phraseology in many other places. The word *ape* refers to the King, not to his courtiers. *He keeps them like an ape, in the corner of his jaw*, &c. means, he keeps them, *as* an ape *keeps food*, in the corner of his jaw, &c. So, in *King Henry IV*, P. I: "— your chamber-lie breeds fleas *like a loach*;" i. e. as fast *as a* loach *breeds loaches*. Again, in *King Lear:* "They flattered me *like a dog*;" i. e. *as a* dog *fawns upon and flatters his master*.

That the particular food in Shakspeare's contemplation was an *apple*, may be inferred from the following passage in *The Captain*, by Beaumont and Fletcher:

"And lie, and kiss my hand unto my mistress,
"As often as *an ape does for an apple*."

I cannot approve of Dr. Farmer's reading. Had our poet meant to introduce both the ape and the apple, he would, I think, have written not *like*, but "*as* an ape an apple."

The two instances above quoted show that any emendation is unnecessary. The reading of the quarto is, however, defensible. *Malone.*

Apple in the quarto is a mere typographical error. So, in Peele's *Araygnement of Paris*, 1584:

"—— you wot it very well
"All that be Dian's maides are vowed to halter *apples* in hell."

The meaning, however, is clearly "as an *ape* does an *apple*." *Ritson.*

[5] —— *and*, sponge, *you shall be dry again.*] So, in the 7th Satire of Marston, 1598:

"He 's but a *spunge*, and shortly needs must leese
"His wrong-got juice, when greatnes' fist shall *squeese*
"*His liquor out.*" *Steevens.*

[6] —— *A knavish speech sleeps in a foolish ear.*] This, if I mistake not, is a proverbial sentence. *Malone.*

Since the appearance of our author's play, these words have become proverbial; but no earlier instance of the idea conveyed by them, has occurred within the compass of my reading. *Steevens.*

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Ham. The body is with the king,[7] but the king is not with the body. The king is a thing ——

Guil. A thing, my lord?

Ham. Of nothing:[8] bring me to him. Hide fox, and all after.[9] [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.

Another Room in the same.

Enter King, *attended.*

King. I have sent to seek him, and to find the body. How dangerous is it, that this man goes loose?

[7] *The body is with the king,*] This answer I do not comprehend. Perhaps it should be,—*The body is* not *with the king*, for *the king is not with the body.* *Johnson.*

Perhaps it may mean this,—The body is in the king's house, (i. e. the present king's) yet the king (i. e. he who should have been king,) is not with the body. Intimating that the usurper is here, the true king in a better place. Or it may mean—*the guilt of the murder lies with the king*, but the king is *not where the body lies.* The affected obscurity of Hamlet must excuse so many attempts to procure something like a meaning. *Steevens.*

[8] Of *nothing:*] Should it not be read—*Or* nothing? When the courtiers remark that Hamlet has contemptuously called the *king a thing*, Hamlet defends himself by observing, that the king must be a *thing*, or *nothing.* *Johnson.*

The text is right. So, in *The Spanish Tragedy:*

" In troth, my lord, it is a *thing of nothing.*"

And, in one of Harvey's Letters, " a silly bug-beare, a sorry puffe of winde, *a thing of nothing.*" *Farmer.*

So, in Decker's *Match me in London*, 1631:

" At what dost thou laugh?

" At *a thing of nothing*, at thee."

Again, in *Look about You*, 1600:

" A very little thing, *a thing of nothing.*" *Steevens.*

Mr. Steevens has given [i. e. edit. 1778] many parallelisms: but the origin of all is to be looked for, I believe, in the 144th *Psalm*, ver. 5: " Man is like *a thing of nought.*" Mr. Steevens must have observed, that the Book of Common Prayer, and the translation of the Bible into English, furnished our old writers with many forms of expression, some of which are still in use. *Whalley.*

[9] —— *Hide fox* &c.] There is a play among children called, *Hide fox, and all after.* *Hanmer.*

The same sport is alluded to in Decker's *Satiromastix:* " — our unhandsome-faced poet does play at bo-peep with your grace, and cries—*All hid, as boys do.*"

This passage is not in the quarto. *Steevens.*

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Yet must not we put the strong law on him:
He 's lov'd of the distracted multitude,
Who like not in their judgment, but their eyes;
And, where 'tis so, the offender's scourge is weigh'd,
But never the offence. To bear all smooth and even,
This sudden sending him away must seem
Deliberate pause: Diseases, desperate grown,
By desperate appliance are reliev'd,

Enter ROSENCRANTZ.

Or not at all.—How now? what hath befallen?

Ros. Where the dead body is bestow'd, my lord,
We cannot get from him.

King. But where is he?

Ros. Without, my lord; guarded, to know your pleasure.

King. Bring him before us.

Ros. Ho, Guildenstern! bring in my lord.

Enter HAMLET *and* GUILDENSTERN.

King. Now, Hamlet, where 's Polonius?

Ham. At supper.

King. At supper? Where?

Ham. Not where he eats, but where he is eaten: a certain convocation of politick worms are e'en at him. Your worm is your only emperor for diet: we fat all creatures else, to fat us; and we fat ourselves for maggots: Your fat king, and your lean beggar, is but variable service; two dishes, but to one table; that 's the end.

King. Alas, alas![1]

Ham. A man may fish with the worm that hath eat of a king; and eat of the fish that hath fed of that worm.

King. What dost thou mean by this?

Ham. Nothing, but to show you how a king may go a progress[2] through the guts of a beggar.

King. Where is Polonius?

Ham. In heaven; send thither to see: if your messenger find him not there, seek him i' the other place yourself. But, indeed, if you find him not within this month, you shall nose him as you go up the stairs into the lobby.

[1] *Alas, alas!*] This speech, and the following, are omitted in the folio. *Steevens.*

[2] —— *go a* progress —] Alluding to the royal journeys of state, always styled *progresses;* a familiar idea to those who, like our author, lived during the reigns of Queen Elizabeth and King James I. *Steevens.*

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King. Go seek him there. [*To some Attendants.*
Ham. He will stay till you come. [*Exeunt Attendants.*
King. Hamlet, this deed, for thine especial safety,—
Which we do tender, as we dearly grieve
For that which thou hast done,—must send thee hence
With fiery quickness:[3] Therefore, prepare thyself;
The bark is ready, and the wind at help,[4]
The associates tend, and every thing is bent
For England.
Ham. For England?
King. Ay, Hamlet.
Ham. Good.
King. So is it, if thou knew'st our purposes.
Ham. I see a cherub, that sees them.—But, come; for England!—Farewel, dear mother.
King. Thy loving father, Hamlet.
Ham. My mother: Father and mother is man and wife; man and wife is one flesh; and so, my mother. Come, for England. [*Exit.*
King. Follow him at foot; tempt him with speed aboard;
Delay it not, I 'll have him hence to-night:
Away; for every thing is seal'd and done
That else leans on the affair: Pray you, make haste.
[*Exeunt* Ros. *and* Guil.
And, England, if my love thou hold'st at aught,
(As my great power thereof may give thee sense;
Since yet thy cicatrice looks raw and red
After the Danish sword, and thy free awe
Pays homage to us,) thou may'st not coldly set
Our sovereign process;[5] which imports at full,

[3] *With fiery quickness:*] These words are not in the quartos. We meet with *fiery expedition* in *King Richard III.* *Steevens.*

[4] —— *the wind at* help,] I suppose it should be read—
The bark is ready, and the wind at helm. *Johnson.*
—— *at* help,] i. e. at hand, ready,—ready to help or assist you. *Ritson.*
Similar phraseology occurs in *Pericles, Prince of Tyre:*
" —— I 'll leave it
" *At* careful nursing." *Steevens.*

[5] —— *thou may'st not coldly* set
Our sovereign process;] I adhere to the reading of the quarto and folio. Mr. M. Mason observes, that, " one of the common acceptations of the verb *set*, is to value or estimate; as we say to *set* at nought; and in that sense it is used here." *Steevens.*

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By letters cónjuring[6] to that effect,
The present death of Hamlet. Do it, England;
For like the hectick in my blood he rages,[7]
And thou must cure me: Till I know 'tis done,
Howe'er my haps, my joys will ne'er begin.[8] [*Exit.*

Our poet has here, I think, as in many other places, used an elliptical expression: "thou may'st not coldly set *by* our sovereign process;" thou may'st not *set little by it*, or estimate it lightly. "To *set by*," Cole renders in his Dict. 1679, by *æstimo*. "*To set little by*," he interprets *parvi-facio*. See many other instances of similar ellipses, in *Cymbeline*, Act V, sc. v. *Malone.*

[6] *By letters* cónjuring —] Thus the folio. The quarto reads:
By letters congruing —. *Steevens.*
The reading of the folio may derive some support from the following passage in *The Hystory of Hamblet*, bl. l: "— making the king of England minister of his massacring resolution; to whom he purposed to send him, [Hamlet] and by letters *desire* him to put him to death." So also, by a subsequent line:
"*Ham.* Wilt thou know the effect of what I wrote?
"*Hor.* Ay, good my lord.
"*Ham.* An earnest *conjuration* from the king," &c.
The verb to *conjure* (in the sense of to *supplicate*) was formerly accented on the first syllable. So, in *Macbeth:*
"I cónjure you, by that which you profess,
"Howe'er you come to know it, answer me." *Malone.*

[7] —— *like the hectick in my blood he rages,*] So, in *Love's Labour 's Lost:*
"I would forget her, but a *fever*, she
"*Reigns in my blood.*" *Malone.*
Scaliger has a parallel sentiment:—*Febris hectica uxor, & non nisi morte avellenda. Steevens.*

[8] *Howe'er my haps, my joys* will *ne'er* begin.] This being the termination of a scene, should, according to our author's custom, be rhymed. Perhaps he wrote:
Howe'er my hopes, *my joys* are not begun.
If *haps* be retained, the meaning will be, *'till I know 'tis done, I shall be miserable*, whatever befal me. *Johnson.*
The folio reads, in support of Dr. Johnson's remark:
Howe'er my haps, my joys were ne'er begun.
Mr. Heath would read:
Howe'er 't may hap, *my joys will ne'er begin. Steevens.*
By his *haps*, he means his *successes*. His fortune was begun, but his joys were not. *M. Mason.*
Howe'er my haps, my joys will *ne'er* begin.] This is the reading of the quarto. The folio, for the sake of rhyme reads:
Howe'er my haps, my joys were *ne'er* begun.
But this, I think, the poet could not have written. The King is speaking of the future time. To say, till I *shall be* informed

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SCENE IV.

A Plain in Denmark.

Enter FORTINBRAS, *and Forces, marching.*

For. Go, captain, from me greet the Danish king;
Tell him, that, by his licence, Fontinbras
Craves[9] the conveyance of a promis'd march
Over his kingdom. You know the rendezvous.
If that his majesty would aught with us,
We shall express our duty in his eye,[1]
And let him know so.

Capt. I will do 't, my lord.

For. Go softly on. [*Exeunt* FOR. *and Forces.*

Enter HAMLET, ROSENCRANTZ, GUILDENSTERN, *&c.*

Ham. Good sir, whose powers are these?[2]

Capt. They are of Norway, sir.

Ham. How purpos'd, sir,
I pray you?

Capt. Against some part of Poland.

Ham. Who
Commands them, sir?

Capt. The nephew to old Norway, Fortinbras.

Ham. Goes it against the main of Poland, sir,
Or for some frontier?

Capt. Truly to speak, sir, and with no addition,
We go to gain a little patch of ground,
That hath in it no profit but the name.

that a certain act *has been* done, whatever may befal me, my joys never *had* a beginning, is surely nonsense. *Malone.*

[9] —— *Craves* —] Thus the quartos. The folio—*Claims. Steevens.*

[1] *We shall express our duty* in his eye,] So, in *Antony and Cleopatra:*

" —— tended her *i' the eyes.*"

In his eye, means, in his presence. The phrase appears to have been formularly. See *The Establishment of the Household of Prince Henry*, A. D. 1610: " Also the gentleman-usher shall be careful to see and informe all such as doe service *in the Prince's eye*, that they perform their dutyes" &c. Again, in *The Regulations for the Government of the Queen's Household*, 1627: " —— all such as doe service *in the Queen's eye.*" *Steevens.*

[2] *Good sir*, &c.] The remaining part of this scene is omitted in the folio. *Steevens.*

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To pay five ducats, five, I would not farm it;
Nor will it yield to Norway, or the Pole,
A ranker rate, should it be sold in fee.
Ham. Why, then the Polack never will defend it.
Capt. Yes, 'tis already garrison'd.
Ham. Two thousand souls, and twenty thousand ducats,
Will not debate the question of this straw:
This is the imposthume of much wealth and peace;
That inward breaks, and shows no cause without
Why the man dies.—I humbly thank you, sir.
Capt. God be wi' you, sir. [*Exit* Cap.
Ros. Will 't please you go, my lord?
Ham. I will be with you straight. Go a little before.
[*Exeunt* Ros. *and* GUIL.
How all occasions do inform against me,
And spur my dull revenge! What is a man,
If his chief good, and market of his time,[3]
Be but to sleep, and feed? a beast, no more.
Sure, he, that made us with such large discourse,[4]
Looking before, and after, gave us not
That capability and godlike reason
To fust in us unus'd. Now, whether it be
Bestial oblivion, or some craven scruple[5]
Of thinking too precisely on the event,—
A thought, which, quarter'd, hath but one part wisdom,
And, ever, three parts coward,—I do not know
Why yet I live to say, *This thing 's to do;*
Sith I have cause, and will, and strength, and means,
To do 't. Examples, gross as earth, exhort me:
Witness, this army, of such mass, and charge,
Led by a delicate and tender prince;
Whose spirit, with divine ambition puff'd,
Makes mouths at the invisible event;

[3] —— *chief good, and market of his time,* &c.] If his highest good, and *that for which he sells his time,* be to sleep and feed. *Johnson.*

Market, I think, here means *profit. Malone.*

[4] —— *large* discourse,] Such latitude of comprehension, such power of reveiwing the past and anticipating the future. *Johnson.*

[5] —— *some* craven *scruple* —] Some cowardly scruple. See Vol. VI, p. 68, n. 7. *Malone.*

So, in *King Henry VI,* P. I:

" Or durst not, for his *craven* heart, say this." *Steevens.*

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Exposing what is mortal, and unsure,
To all that fortune, death, and danger, dare,
Even for an egg-shell. Rightly to be great,
Is, not to stir without great argument;[6]
But greatly to find quarrel in a straw,
When honour 's at the stake. How stand I then,
That have a father kill'd, a mother stain'd,
Excitements of my reason, and my blood,[7]
And let all sleep? while, to my shame, I see
The imminent death of twenty thousand men,
That, for a fantasy, and trick of fame,
Go to their graves like beds; fight for a plot[8]
Whereon the numbers cannot try the cause,
Which is not tomb enough, and continent,[9]
To hide the slain?—O, from this time forth,
My thoughts be bloody, or be nothing worth! [*Exit.*

[6] —— *Rightly to be great,*
Is, not to stir without &c.] This passage I have printed according to the copy. Mr. Theobald had regulated it thus:
—— *'Tis not to be great,*
Never to stir without great argument;
But greatly &c.
The sentiment of Shakspeare is partly just, and partly romantick.
—— *Rightly to be great,*
Is, not to stir without great argument;
is exactly philosophical.
But greatly to find quarrel in a straw,
When honour 's at the stake.
is the idea of a modern hero. *But then,* says he, *honour is an argument, or subject of debate, sufficiently* great, *and* when honour is at stake, we must *find cause of quarrel in a straw. Johnson.*

[7] *Excitements of my reason, and my blood,*] Provocations which excite both my reason and my passions to vengeance. *Johnson.*

[8] —— *a plot.*] A piece, or portion. See *King Lear,* Act III, sc. ii, Vol. XIV. *Reed.*
So, in *The Mirror for Magistrates:*
" Of groumde to win *a plot,* a while to dwell,
" We venture lives, and send our souls to hell." *Henderson.*

[9] —— *continent,*] *Continent,* in our author, means that which comprehends or encloses. So, in *King Lear:*
" Rive your concealing *continents.*"
Again, in Chapman's version of the third *Iliad:*
" ——— did take
" Thy fair form for a *continent* of parts as fair, —."
See *King Lear,* Act III, sc. ii. *Steevens.*
Again, Lord Bacon, *On the Advancement of Learning,* 4to. 1633, p. 7: " —— if there be no fullnesse, then is the *continent* greater than the content." *Reed.*

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SCENE V.

Elsinore. *A Room in the Castle.*

Enter Queen *and* HORATIO.

Queen. —— I will not speak with her.

Hor. She is importunate; indeed, distract;
Her mood will needs be pitied.

Queen. What would she have?

Hor. She speaks much of her father; says, she hears,
There 's tricks i' the world; and hems, and beats her heart;
Spurns enviously at straws;[1] speaks things in doubt,
That carry but half sense: her speech is nothing,
Yet the unshaped use of it doth move
The hearers to collection;[2] they aim at it,[3]
And botch the words up fit to their own thoughts;
Which, as her winks, and nods, and gestures yield them,
Indeed would make one think, there might be thought,
Though nothing sure, yet much unhappily.[4]

[1] *Spurns* enviously *at straws;*] *Envy* is much oftener put by our poet (and those of his time) for direct *aversion*, than for *malignity conceived at the sight of another's excellence or happiness.*

So, in *King Henry VIII:*

" You turn the good we offer into *envy*."

Again, in *God's Revenge against Murder*, 1621, *Hist.* VI.— " She loves the memory of Syponius, and *envies* and detests that of her two husbands." *Steevens.*

See Vol. X, p. 84, n. 1; and Vol. XI, p. 240, n. 7. *Malone.*

[2] —— *to* collection;] i. e. to deduce consequences from such premises; or, as Mr. M. Mason observes, " endeavour to collect some meaning from them." So, in *Cymbeline*, scene the last:

" —— whose containing
" Is so from sense to hardness, that I can
" Make no *collection* of it."

See the note on this passage. *Steevens.*

[3] —— *they* aim *at it,*] The quartos read—*they* yawn *at it.* To *aim* is to guess. So, in *Romeo and Juliet:*

" I *aim'd* so near, when I suppos'd you lov'd." *Steevens.*

[4] *Though nothing sure, yet much* unhappily.] i. e. though her meaning cannot be certainly collected, yet there is enough to put a mischievous interpretation to it. *Warburton.*

That *unhappy* once signified *mischievous*, may be known from P. Holland's translation of Pliny's *Natural History*, Book XIX, ch. vii: "—— the shrewd and *unhappie* foules which lie upon

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Queen. 'Twere good, she were spoken with;[5] for she may strew
Dangerous conjectures in ill-breeding minds:
Let her come in. [*Exit* Hor.
To my sick soul, as sin's true nature is,
Each toy seems prologue to some great amiss:[6]
So full of artless jealousy is guilt,
It spills, itself in fearing to be spilt.

Re-enter HORATIO, *with* OPHELIA.

Oph. Where is the beauteous majesty of Denmark?

Queen. How now, Ophelia?

Oph. *How should I your true love know*[7]
From another one?
By his cockle hat and staff,
And his sandal shoon.[8] [Singing.

the lands, and eat up the seed new sowne." We still use *unlucky* in the same sense. *Steevens.*

See Vol. V, p. 286, n. 7; and Vol. XI, p. 235, n. 2. *Malone.*

[5] *'Twere good she were spoken with;*] These lines are given to the Queen in the folio, and to Horatio in the quarto. *Johnson.*

I think the two first lines of Horatio's speech ['*Twere good*, &c.] belong to him; the rest to the Queen. *Blackstone.*

In the quarto, the Queen, Horatio, and a *Gentleman*, enter at the beginning of this scene. The two speeches, "She is importunate," &c. and "She speaks much of her father," &c. are there given to the *Gentleman*, and the line now before us, as well as the two following, to *Horatio:* the remainder of this speech to the Queen. I think it probable that the regulation proposed by Sir W. Blackstone was that intended by Shakspeare. *Malone.*

[6] —— *to some great* amiss:] Shakspeare is not singular in his use of this word as a substantive. So, in *The Arraignment of Paris*, 1584:

"Gracious forbearers of this world's *amiss.*"

Again in Lyly's *Woman in the Moon*, 1597:

"Pale be my looks, to witness my *amiss.*"

Again, in Greene's *Disputation between a He Coneycatcher*, &c. 1592: "revive in them the memory of my *great amiss.*" *Steevens.*

Each *toy* is, each trifle. *Malone.*

[7] *How should I your true love* &c.] There is no part of this play in its representation on the stage, more pathetick than this scene; which, I suppose, proceeds from the utter insensibility Ophelia has to her own misfortunes.

A great sensibility, or none at all, seems to produce the same effect. In the latter the audience supply what she wants, and with the former they sympathize. *Sir J. Reynolds.*

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Queen. Alas, sweet lady, what imports this song?
Oph. Say you? nay, pray you, mark.

He is dead and gone, lady, [Sings.
He is dead and gone;
At his head a grass-green turf,
At his heels a stone.

O, ho!

Queen. Nay, but Ophelia, ——
Oph. Pray you, mark.

White his shroud as the mountain snow, [Sings.

Enter King.

Queen. Alas, look here, my lord.

Oph. *Larded all with sweet flowers;*[9]
Which bewept to the grave did go,[1]
With true-love showers.

King. How do you, pretty lady?
Oph. Well, God 'ield you![2] They say, the owl was a

[3] *By his cockle hat and staff,*
And his sandal shoon.] This is the description of a pilgrim. While this kind of devotion was in favour, love-intrigues were carried on under that mask. Hence the old ballads and novels made pilgrimages the subjects of their plots. The cockle-shell hat was one of the essential badges of this vocation: for the chief places of devotion being beyond sea, or on the coasts, the pilgrims were accustomed to put cockle-shells upon their hats, to denote the intention or performance of their devotion. *Warburton.*

So, in Green's *Never too late*, 1616:

" A hat of straw like to a swain,
" Shelter for the sun and rain,
" With a *scallop-shell* before," &c.

Again, in *The Old Wives Tale*, by George Peele, 1595: " I will give thee a palmer's *staff* of yvorie, and a *scallop-shell* of beaten gold." *Steevens.*

[9] Larded *all with sweet flowers;*] The expression is taken from cookery. *Johnson.*

[1] —— *did go,*] The old editions read—*did* not *go.* Corrected by Mr. Pope. *Steevens.*

[2] *Well,* God 'ield *you!*] i. e. Heaven reward you! So, in *Antony and Cleopatra:*

" Tend me to-night two hours, I ask no more,
" And the *Gods yield you* for 't!"

So, Sir John Grey, in a letter in Ashmole's Appendix to his Account of the Garter, Numb. 46: " The king of his gracious lordshipe, *God yeld* him, hafe chosen me to be owne of his brethrene of the knyghts of the garter." *Theobald.*

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baker's daughter.[3] Lord, we know what we are, but know not what we may be. God be at your table!

King. Conceit upon her father.

Oph. Pray, let us have no words of this; but when they ask you, what it means, say you this:

Good morrow, 'tis Saint Valentine's day,[4]
All in the morning betime,
And I a maid at your window,
To be your Valentine:

[3] —— *the owl was a baker's daughter,*] This was a metamorphosis of the common people, arising from the mealy appearance of the owl's feathers, and her guarding the *bread* from mice. *Warburton.*

To *guard the* bread *from mice*, is rather the office of a *cat* than an *owl*. In *barns* and *granaries*, indeed, the services of the *owl* are still acknowledged. This was, however, no *metamorphosis of the common people*, but a legendary story, which both Dr. Johnson and myself have read, yet in what book at least I cannot recollect.—Our Saviour being refused bread by the *daughter of a baker*, is described as punishing her by turning her into an *owl*. *Steevens.*

This is a common story among the vulgar in Gloucestershire, and is thus related: "Our Saviour went into a baker's shop where they were baking, and asked for some bread to eat. The mistress of the shop immediately put a piece of dough into the oven to bake for him; but was reprimanded by her daughter, who insisting that the piece of dough was too large, reduced it to a very small size. The dough, however, immediately afterwards began to swell, and presently became of a most enormous size. Whereupon, the baker's daughter cried out 'Heugh, heugh, heugh,' which owl-like noise probably induced our Saviour for her wickedness to transform her into that bird." This story is often related to children, in order to deter them from such illiberal behaviour to poor people. *Douce.*

[4] Good *morrow*, 'tis *Saint* Valentine's *day*,] Old copies:
To-*morrow* is *&c.*
The correction is Dr. Farmer's. *Steevens.*

There is a rural tradition that about this time of year birds choose their mates. Bourne, in his *Antiquities of the Common People*, observes, that "it is a ceremony never omitted among the vulgar, to draw lots, which they term *Valentines*, on the *eve* before Valentine-day. The names of a select number of one sex are by an equal number of the other put into some vessel; and after that every one draws a name, which for the present is called their *Valentine*, and is also look'd upon as a good omen of their being man and wife afterwards." Mr. Brand adds, that he has "searched the legend of St. Valentine, but thinks there is no occurrence in his life, that could give rise to this ceremony." *Malone.*

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Then up he rose, and don'd his clothes,
And dupp'd the chamber door;[5]
Let in the maid, that out a maid
Never departed more.

King. Pretty Ophelia!

Oph. Indeed, without an oath, I 'll make an end on 't:

By Gis,[6] *and by Saint Charity,*[7]
Alack, and fy for shame!
Young men will do 't, if they come to 't;
By cock,[8] *they are to blame.*

[5] *And* dupp'd *the chamber door;*] To *dup*, is to *do up;* to lift the latch. It were easy to write—And *op'd. Johnson.*

To *dup*, was a common contraction of to *do up*. So, in *Damon and Pythias*, 1582: "— the porters are drunk; will they not *dup* the gate to-day?"

Lord Surrey, in his translation of the second *Æneid*, renders

Panduntur portæ &c.

"The gates *cast up*, we issued out to play."

The phrase seems to have been adopted either from *doing up* the *latch*, or drawing up the *portcullis*. So, in the ancient MS. romance of *The Sowdon of Babyloyne*, p. 40:

"To the prison she hyed hir swyth,
"The *prison dore up she doth.*"

Again, in *The Cooke's Play*, in the Chester collection of mysteries, MS. Harl. 1013, p. 140:

"*Open up* hell-gates anon."

It appears from *Martin Mark-all's Apologie to the Bel-man of London*, 1610, that in the cant of gypsies, &c. *Dup the gigger*, signified *to open the doore. Steevens.*

[6] *By* Gis,] I rather imagine it should be read:

By Cis, ———

That is, by St. Cecily. *Johnson.*

See the second paragraph of the next note. *Steevens.*

[7] ——*by* Saint Charity,] *Saint Charity* is a known saint among the Roman Catholicks. Spenser mentions her, Eclog. V, 255:

"Ah dear lord, and sweet *Saint Charity!*"

Again, in *The Downfall of Robert Earl of Huntington*, 1601:

"Therefore, sweet master, for *Saint Charity.*"

Again, in *A lytell Geste of Robyn Hode:*

"Lete me go, then sayd the sheryf,
"For *saint Charytè*, —."

Again, *ibid:*

"Gyve us some of your spendynge,
"For *saynt Charytè.*"

I find, by *Giese*, used as an adjuration, both by Gascoigne in his *Poems*, by Preston in his *Cambyses*, and in the comedy of *See me and see me not*, 1618:

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Quoth she, before you tumbled me,
You promis'd me to wed:
[He answers.[9]]
So would I ha' done, by yonder sun,
An thou hadst not come to my bed.

King. How long hath she been thus?

Oph. I hope, all will be well. We must be patient: but I cannot choose but weep, to think, they should lay him i' the cold ground: My brother shall know of it, and so I thank you for your good counsel. Come, my coach! Good night, ladies;[1] good night, sweet ladies: good night, good night. [*Exit.*

" By *Gisse* I swear, were I so fairly wed," &c.
Again, in *King Edward III*, 1599:
" By *Gis*, fair lords, ere many daies be past," &c.
Again, in Heywood's 23d Epigram, Fourth Hundred:
" Nay, by *Gis*, he looketh on you maister, quoth he."
Steevens.

Mr. Steevens's first assertion, though disputed by a catholick friend, can be supported by infallible authority. " We read," says Dr. Douglas, "in the martyrology on the first of August—*Romæ passio sanctarum virginum*, Fidei, Spei, *et* CHARITATIS, *quæ sub Hadriano principe martyriæ coronam adeptæ sunt.*"
Criterion, p. 68. *Ritson.*

In the scene between the Bastard Faulconbridge and the friars and nunne, in the First Part of *The troublesome Raigne of King John*, (edit. 1779, p. 256, &c.) " the nunne swears *by Gis*, and the friers pray to *Saint Withold* (another obsolete saint mentioned in *King Lear*, Vol. XIV,) and adjure him by *Saint Charitie* to bear them." *Blackstone.*

By Gis,] There is not the least mention of any saint whose name corresponds with this, either in the *Roman Calendar*, the service *in Usum Sarum*, or in the Benedictionary of Bishop Athelwold. I believe the word to be only a corrupted abbreviation of *Jesus*, the letters J. H. S. being anciently all that was set down to denote that sacred name, on altars, the covers of books, &c. *Ridley.*

Though *Gis* may be, and I believe is, only a contraction of *Jesus*, there is certainly a Saint *Gisles*, with whose name it corresponds. *Ritson.*

[8] *By* cock,] This is likewise a corruption of the sacred name. Many instances of it are given in a note at the beginning of the fifth Act of *The Second Part of King Henry IV*. *Steevens.*

[9] *He answers.*] These words I have added from the quartos. *Steevens.*

[1] Come, my coach! *Good night, ladies;* &c.] In Marlowe's *Tamburlaine*, 1590, Zabina in her frenzy uses the same expres-

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King. Follow her close; give her good watch, I pray you. [*Exit* HOR.
O! this is the poison of deep grief; it springs
All from her father's death: And now behold,
O Gertrude, Gertrude,
When sorrows come,[2] they come not single spies,
But in battalions! First, her father slain;
Next, your son gone; and he most violent author
Of his own just remove: The people muddied,
Thick and unwholesome in their thoughts, and whispers,
For good Polonius' death; and we have done but greenly,[3]
In hugger-mugger to inter him:[4] Poor Ophelia
Divided from herself, and her fair judgment;

sion: "Hell, *make ready my coach*, my chair, my jewels, I *come*, I *come*." *Malone.*

[2] *When sorrows come*, &c.] In Ray's *Proverbs* we find, "Misfortunes seldom come alone," as a proverbial phrase. *Reed.*

[3] —— *but* greenly,] But *unskilfully*; with *greenness*; that is, without *maturity* of judgment. *Johnson.*

[4] *In* hugger-mugger *to inter him:*] All the modern editions that I have consulted, give it:

In private *to inter him*: —.

That the words now replaced are better, I do not undertake to prove; it is sufficient that they are Shakspeare's: if phraseology is to be changed as words grow uncouth by disuse, or gross by vulgarity, the history of every language will be lost; we shall no longer have the words of any author; and, as these alterations will be often unskilfully made, we shall in time have very little of his meaning. *Johnson.*

On this just observation I ground the restoration of a gross and unpleasing word in a preceding passage, for which Mr. Pope substituted *groan*. See p. 131, n. 9. The alteration in the present instance was made by the same editor. *Malone.*

This expression is used in *The Revenger's Tragedy*, 1609:

" —— he died like a politician,
" In *hugger-mugger*."

Again, in Harrington's *Ariosto*:

" So that it might be done in *hugger-mugger*."

Shakspeare probably took the expression from the following passage in Sir Thomas North's translation of Plutarch:—" Antonius thinking that his body should be honourably buried, and not in *hugger-mugger*."

It appears from Greene's *Groundwork of Coneycatching*, 1592, that *to hugger* was to lurk about. *Steevens.*

The meaning of the expression is ascertained by Florio's Italian Dictionary, 1598: " *Dinascoso*, Secretly, hiddenly, *in hugger-mugger*." *Malone.*

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Without the which we are pictures, or mere beasts.
Last, and as much containing as all these,
Her brother is in secret come from France:
Feeds on his wonder,[5] keeps himself in clouds,
And wants not buzzars to infect his ear
With pestilent speeches of his father's death;
Wherein necessity, of matter beggar'd,[6]
Will nothing stick our person to arraign
In ear and ear. O my dear Gertrude, this,
Like to a murdering piece,[7] in many places

[5] Feeds *on his wonder,*] The folio reads—
Keeps *on his wonder,* ——.
The quarto—
Feeds *on* this *wonder,* ——.
Thus the true reading is picked out from between them. Sir T. Hanmer reads unnecessarily—
Feeds *on his* anger, ——. *Johnson.*

[6] *Wherein necessity,* &c.] Sir T. Hanmer reads:
Whence animosity *of matter beggar'd.*
He seems not to have understood the connection. *Wherein,* that is, *in which pestilent speeches, necessity,* or *the obligation of an accuser to support his charge, will nothing stick,* &c. *Johnson.*

[7] *Like to a* murdering piece,] Such a piece as assassins use, with many barrels. It is necessary to apprehend this, to see the justness of the similitude. *Warburton.*

The same term occurs in a passage in *The Double Marriage* of Beaumont and Fletcher:

" And like a *murdering piece,* aims not at one,
" But all that stand within the dangerous level."

Again, in *All 's Lost by Lust,* a tragedy by Rowley, 1633:

" If thou fail'st too, the king comes with a *murdering piece,*
" In the rear."

Again, in *A Fair Quarrel,* by Midddleton and Rowley, 1622:

" There is not such another *murdering piece*
" In all the stock of calumny."

It appears from a passage in Smith's *Sea Grammer,* 1627, that it was a piece of ordnance used in ships of war: " A case-shot is any kinde of small bullets, nailes, old iron, or the like, to put into the case, to shoot out of the ordnances or *murderers;* these will doe much mischiefe." &c. *Steevens.*

A *murdering-piece* was the specifick term in Shakspeare's time for a piece of ordnance, or small cannon. The word is found in Cole's *Latin Dictionary,* 1679, and rendered, " *tormentum murale.*"

The small cannon, which are, or were used in the forecastle, half-deck, or steerage of a ship of war, were within this century, called *murdering-pieces. Malone.*

Perhaps what is now, from the manner of it, called a *swivel.*

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Gives me superfluous death! [*A Noise within.*

Queen. Alack! what noise is this?[8]

Enter a Gentleman.

King. Attend.
Where are my Switzers?[9] Let them guard the door:
What is the matter?

Gent. Save yourself, my lord;
The ocean, overpeering of his list,[1]
Eats not the flats with more impetuous haste,
Than young Laertes, in a riotous head,
O'erbears your officers! The rabble call him, lord;
And, as the world were now but to begin,
Antiquity forgot, custom not known,
The ratifiers and props of every word,[2]

It is mentioned in Sir T. Roes *Voiage to the E. Indies*, at the end of Della Valle's *Travels*, 1665: "— the East India company had a very little pinnace...mann'd she was with ten men, and had only one small *murdering-piece* within her." Probably it was never charged with a single ball, but always with shot, pieces of old iron, &c. *Ritson.*

[8] *Alack!* &c.] This speech of the Queen is omitted in the quartos. *Steevens.*

[9] —— *my* Switzers?] I have observed in many of our old plays, that the guards attendant on Kings are called *Switzers*, and that without any regard to the country where the scene lies. Thus, in Beaumont and Fletcher's *Noble Gentleman*, Act III, sc. i:

" ——— was it not
" Some place of gain, as clerk to the great band
" Of marrow-bones, that the people call the *Switzers?*
" Men made of beef and sarcenet?" *Reed.*

The reason is, because the Swiss in the time of our poet, as at present, were hired to fight the battles of other nations. So, in Nashe's *Christ's Teares over Jerusalem*, 4to. 1594: "Law, logicke, and the *Switzers*, may be hired to fight for any body." *Malone.*

[1] *The ocean, overpeering of his* list,] The lists are the barriers which the spectators of a tournament must not pass. *Johnson.*

See note on *Othello*, Act IV, sc. i. *Steevens.*

List, in this place, only signifies *boundary*, i. e. the shore. So, in *King Henry IV*, P. II:

" The very *list*, the very utmost bound
" Of all our fortunes."

The *selvage* of cloth was in both places, I believe, in our author's thoughts. *Malone.*

[2] *The ratifiers and props of every* word,] By *word* is here meant *a declaration*, or proposal. It is determined to this sense, by the inference it hath to what had just preceded:

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They cry, *Choose we; Laertes shall be king!*
Caps, hands, and tongues, applaud it to the clouds,
Laertes shall be king, Laertes king!

Queen. How cheerfully on the false trail they cry!
O, this is counter, you false Danish dogs.[3]

King. The doors are broke. [*Noise within.*

Enter LAERTES, *armed;* Danes *following.*

Laer. Where is this king?—Sirs, stand you all without.

Dan. No, let 's come in.

Laer. I pray you, give me leave.

Dan. We will, we will. [*They retire without the Door.*

Laer. I thank you:—keep the door.—O thou vile king,
Give me my father.

Queen. Calmly, good Laertes.

Laer. That drop of blood, that 's calm, proclaims me bastard;

"The rabble call him lord," &c.

This acclamation, which is the *word* here spoken of, was made without regard to antiquity, or received custom, whose concurrence, however, is necessarily required to confer validity and stability in every proposal of this kind. *Heath.*

Sir T. Hanmer would transpose this line and the next. Dr. Warburton proposes to read, *ward;* and Dr. Johnson, *weal,* instead of *word.* I should be rather for reading, *work. Tyrwhitt.*

In the first folio there is only a comma at the end of the above line; and will not the passage bear this construction?—The rabble call him lord, and as if the world were now but to begin, and as if the ancient custom of hereditary succession were unknown, they, the ratifiers and props of *every word he utters,* cry,—Let us make choice, that Laertes shall be king. *Tollet.*

This *construction* might certainly be admitted, and *the ratifiers and props of every word* might be understood to be applied to the *rabble* mentioned in a preceding line, without Sir T. Hanmer's transposition of this and the following line; but there is no authority for what Mr. Tollet adds, "of every word *he* [Laertes] *utters,*" for the poet has not described Laertes as having uttered a word. If, therefore, the rabble are called *the ratifiers and props of every word,* we must understand, "of every word *uttered by themselves:*" which is so tame, that it would be unjust to our poet to suppose that to have been his meaning. *Ratifiers,* &c. refer not to the people, but to *custom* and *antiquity,* which the speaker says are the true ratifiers and props of every word. The last word however of the line may well be suspected to be corrupt; and Mr. Tyrwhitt has probably suggested the true reading. *Malone.*

[3] *O, this is counter, you false Danish dogs.*] Hounds run *counter* when they trace the trail backwards. *Johnson.*

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Cries, cuckold, to my father; brands the harlot
Even here, between the chaste unsmirched brow,[4]
Of my true mother.
King. What is the cause, Laertes,
That thy rebellion looks so giant-like?—
Let him go, Gertrude; do not fear our person;
There 's such divinity doth hedge a king,
That treason can but peep to what it would,
Acts little of his will.—Tell me, Laertes,
Why thou art thus incens'd;—Let him go, Gertrude;—
Speak, man.
Laer. Where is my father?
King. Dead.
Queen. But not by him.
King. Let him demand his fill.
Laer. How came he dead? I 'll not be juggled with:
To hell, allegiance! vows, to the blackest devil!
Conscience, and grace, to the profoundest pit!
I dare damnation: To this point I stand,—
That both the worlds I give to negligence,[5]
Let come what comes; only I 'll be reveng'd
Most throughly for my father.
King. Who shall stay you?
Laer. My will, not all the world's:
And, for my means, I 'll husband them so well,
They shall go far with little.
King. Good Laertes,
If you desire to know the certainty
Of your dear father's death, is 't writ in your revenge,
That, sweepstake, you will draw both friend and foe,
Winner and loser?
Laer. None but his enemies.
King. Will you know them then?

[4] —— unsmirched *brow,*] i. e. clean, not defiled. To *besmirch,* our author uses, Act I, sc. v, and again in *King Henry V,* Act IV, sc. iii.

This seems to be an allusion to a proverb often introduced in the old comedies. Thus, in *The London Prodigal,* 1605: "— as true as the skin between any man's *brows.*"

The same phrase is also found in *Much Ado about Nothing,* Act III, sc. v. *Steevens.*

[5] *That* both the worlds *I give to negligence,*] So, in *Macbeth:*
"But let the frame of things disjoint, *both the worlds* suffer." *Steevens.*

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Laer. To his good friends thus wide I 'll ope my arms;
And, like the kind life-rend'ring pelican,[6]
Repast them with my blood.
King. Why, now you speak
Like a good child, and a true gentleman.
That I am guiltless of your father's death,
And am most sensibly[7] in grief for it,
It shall as level to your judgment 'pear,[8]
As day does to your eye.
Danes. [*within*] Let her come in.
Laer. How now! what noise is that?

Enter OPHELIA, *fantastically dressed, with Straws and Flowers.*

O heat, dry up my brains! tears seven times salt,
Burn out the sense and virtue of mine eye!—
By heaven, thy madness shall be paid with weight,
Till our scale turn the beam. O rose of May!
Dear maid, kind sister, sweet Ophelia!—
O heavens! is 't possible, a young maid's wits
Should be as mortal as an old man's life?
Nature is fine in love: and, where 'tis fine,
It sends some precious instance of itself

[6] —— *life-rend'ring* pelican,] So, in the ancient *Interlude of Nature*, bl. l. no date:

"Who taught the cok hys watche-howres to observe,
"And syng of corage wyth shryll throte on hye?
"Who taught the *pellycan* her tender hart to carve?—
"For she nolde suffer her byrdys to dye?"

Again, in the old play of *King Leir*, 1605:

"I am as kind as is the *pelican*,
"That kils itselfe, to save her young ones lives."

It is almost needless to add that this account of the bird is entirely fabulous. *Steevens.*

[7] —— *most* sensibly —] Thus the quarto, 1604. The folio, following the error of a later quarto, reads—most *sensible*. *Malone.*

[8] —— *to your judgment* 'pear,] So the quarto. The folio, and all the later editions, read:

—— *to your judgment* pierce,

less intelligibly. *Johnson.*

This elision of the verb to *appear*, is common to Beaumont and Fletcher. So, in *The Maid in the Mill*:

"They *'pear* so handsomely, I will go forward."

Again:

"And where they *'pear* so excellent in little,
"They will but flame in great." *Steevens.*

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After the thing it loves.[9]

Oph. *They bore him barefac'd on the bier;*[1]
Hey no nonny, nonny hey nonny:[2]
And in his grave rain'd many a tear;—
Fare you well, my dove!

Laer. Hadst thou thy wits, and didst persuade revenge, It could not move thus.

Oph. You must sing, *Down a-down, an you call him a-down-a.* O, how the wheel becomes it![3] It is the false steward, that stole his master's daughter.

[9] *Nature is* fine *in love: and, where 'tis fine,*
It sends some precious instance of itself
After the thing it loves.] These lines are not in the quarto, and might have been omitted in the folio without great loss, for they are obscure and affected; but, I think, they require no emendation. *Love* (says Laertes) is the passion by which *nature is most* exalted and *refined;* and as substances, *refined* and subtilised, easily obey any impulse, or follow any attraction, some part of nature, so purified and *refined,* flies off after the attracting object, after the thing it loves:

"As into air the purer spirits flow,
"And separate from their kindred dregs below,
"So flew her soul." *Johnson.*

The meaning of the passage may be—That her wits, like the spirit of fine essences, flew off or evaporated. *Fine,* however, sometimes signifies *artful.* So, in *All 's Well that Ends Well:* "Thou art too *fine* in thy evidence." *Steevens.*

[1] *They bore him barefac'd on the bier;* &c.] So, in Chaucer's *Knighte's Tale,* Mr. Tyrwhitt's edit. ver. 2879:

"He laid him bare the visage on the bere,
"Therwith he wept that pitee was to here." *Steevens.*

[2] *Hey no nonny,* &c.] These words, which were the burthen of a song, are found only in the folio. See Vol. XIV, *King Lear,* Act III, sc. iii. *Malone.*

These words are also found in old John Heywood's *Play of The Wether:*

"Gyve boys wether, quoth a *nonny nonny.*"

I am informed, that among the common people in Norfolk, to *nonny* signifies to *trifle* or *play with.* *Steevens.*

[3] *O, how the* wheel *becomes it!* &c.] The story alluded to I do not know; but perhaps the lady stolen by the steward was reduced to *spin.* *Johnson.*

The *wheel* may mean no more than *the burthen of the song,* which she had just repeated, and as such was formerly used. I met with the following observation in an old quarto black-letter book, published before the time of Shakspeare.

"The song was accounted a good one, though it was not moche

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Laer. This nothing 's more than matter.

Oph. There 's rosemary, that 's for remembrance; pray you, love, remember: and there is pansies, that 's for thoughts.[4]

graced by the *wheele* which in no wise accorded with the subject matter thereof."

I quote this from memory, and from a book, of which I cannot recollect the exact title or date; but the passage was in a preface to some songs or sonnets. I well remember, to have met with the word in the same sense in other old books.

Rota, indeed, as I am informed, is the ancient musical term in Latin, for the burden of a song. Dr. Farmer, however, has just favoured me with a quotation from Nicholas Breton's *Toyes of an Idle Head*, 1577, which at once explains the word *wheel* in the sense for which I have contended:

" That I may sing, full merrily,
" Not heigh ho *wele*, but care away!"

i. e. not with a melancholy, but a cheerful burthen.

I formerly supposed that the ballad alluded to by Ophelia, was that entered on the books of the Stationers' Company: " October 1580. Four ballades of the Lord of Lorn and the *False Steward*," &c. but Mr. Ritson assures me there is no corresponding *theft* in it. *Steevens.*

I am inclined to think that *wheel* is here used in its ordinary sense, and that these words allude to the occupation of the girl who is supposed to sing the song alluded to by Ophelia.—The following lines in Hall's *Virgidemiarum*, 1597, appear to me to add some support to this interpretation:

" Some drunken rimer thinks his time well spent,
" If he can live to see his name in print;
" Who when he is once fleshed to the presse,
" And sees his handselle have such fair successe,
" *Sung to the wheele*, and sung unto the payle,
" He sends forth thraves of *ballads* to the sale."

So, in Sir Thomas Overbury's *Characters*, 1614: " She makes her hands hard with labour, and her head soft with pittie; and when winter evenings fall early, sitting at her merry *wheele*, she sings a defiance to the giddy wheele of fortune."

Our author likewise furnishes an authority to the same purpose. *Twelfth Night*, Act II, sc. iv:

" —— Come, the *song* we had last night:
" The *spinsters* and knitters in the sun,
" Do use to *chaunt* it."

A musical antiquary may perhaps contend, that the controverted words of the text alludes to an ancient instrument mentioned by Chaucer, and called by him a *rote*, by others a *vielle*; which was played upon by the friction of a *wheel*. *Malone.*

[4] *There 's rosemary, that 's for remembrance;—and there is pansies, that 's for thoughts.*] There is probably some mythology in

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Laer. A document in madness; thoughts and remembrance fitted.

Oph. There 's fennel for you, and columbines:[5]—

the choice of these herbs, but I cannot explain it. *Pansies* is for *thoughts*, because of its name, *Pensees*; but why *rosemary* indicates *remembrance*, except that it is an ever-green, and carried at funerals, I have not discovered. *Johnson.*

So, in *All Fools*, a comedy, by Chapman, 1605:

" What flowers are these?

" The *pansie* this.

" O, that 's for lovers' *thoughts!*"

Rosemary was anciently supposed to strengthen the memory, and was not only carried at funerals, but worn at weddings, as appears from a passage in Beaumont and Fletcher's *Elder Brother*, Act III, sc. iii.

And from another in *Ram-Alley, or Merry Tricks*, 1611:

" —— will I be *wed* this morning,

" Thou shalt not be there, nor once be graced with

" A piece of *rosemary*."

Again, in *The Noble Spanish Soldier*, 1634: " I meet few but are stuck with *rosemary*: every one asked me who was to be *married*."

Again, in Greene's *Never too Late*, 1616: " —— she hath given thee a nosegay of flowers, wherein, as a top-gallant for all the rest, is set in *rosemary for remembrance*."

Again, in *A Dialogue between Nature and the Phœnix*, by R. Chester, 1601:

" There 's *rosemarie*; the Arabians justifie

" (Physitions of exceeding perfect skill)

" It comforteth the braine and *memorie*," &c. *Steevens.*

Rosemary being supposed to strengthen the memory, was the emblem of fidelity in lovers. So, in *A Handfull of Pleasant Delites, containing sundrie New Sonets*, 16mo. 1584:

" *Rosemary* is *for remembrance*

" Betweene us daie and night;

" Wishing that I might alwaies have

" You present in my sight."

The poem in which these lines are found, is entitled *A Nosegaie alwaies sweet for Lovers to send for Tokens of Love*, &c. *Malone.*

[5] *There 's* fennel *for you, and* columbines:] Greene, in his *Quip for an Upstart Courtier*, 1620, calls *fennel, women's weeds*: "fit generally for that sex, sith while they are maidens, they wish wantonly."

Among Turbervile's *Epitaphes*, &c. p. 42, b. I likewise find the following mention of *fennel*:

" Your *fenell* did declare

" (As simple men can showe)

" That flattrie in my breast I bare,

" Where friendship ought to grow."

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there 's rue for you; and here 's some for me:—we may call it, herb of grace o' Sundays:[6]—you may wear your

I know not of what *columbines* were supposed to be emblematical. They are again mentioned in *All Fools*, by Chapman, 1605:

" What 's that?—a *columbine?*

" No: that *thankless* flower grows not in my garden."

Gerard, however, and other herbalists, impute few, if any, virtues to them; and they may therefore be styled *thankless*, because they appear to make no grateful return for their creation.

Again, in the 15th Song of Drayton's *Polyolbion:*

" The *columbine* amongst, they sparingly do set."

From the *Caltha Poetarum*, 1599, it should seem as if this flower was the emblem of cuckoldom:

" —— the blue *cornuted* columbine,

" Like to the crooked horns of Acheloy." *Steevens.*

Columbine was an emblem of cuckoldom on account of the horns of its nectaria, which are remarkable in this plant. See *Aquilegia*, in Linnæus's Genera, 684. *S. W.*

The columbine was emblematical of forsaken lovers:

" The *columbine* in tawny often taken,

" *Is then ascribed to such as are forsaken.*"

Browne's *Britannia's Pastorals*, B. I, Song ii, 1613. *H. White.*

Ophelia gives her fennel and columbines to the *king*. In the collection of Sonnets quoted above, the former is thus mentioned:

" *Fennel* is *for flatterers*,

" An evil thing 'tis sure;

" But I have always meant truely,

" With constant heart most pure."

See also, Florio's *Italian Dictionary*, 1598: " *Dare finocchio*, to give *fennel*,—to flatter, to dissemble." *Malone.*

[6] —— *there 's* rue *for you; and here 's some for me:—we may call it*, herb of grace o' Sundays: *&c.*] I believe there is a quibble meant in this passage; *rue* anciently signifying the same as *ruth*, i. e. sorrow. Ophelia gives the queen some, and keeps a proportion of it for herself. There is the same kind of play with the same word in *King Richard II.*

Herb of grace is one of the titles which *Tucca* gives to *William Rufus*, in Decker's *Satiromastix*. I suppose the first syllable of the surname *Rufus* introduced the quibble.

In *Doctor Do-good's Directions*, an ancient ballad, is the same allusion:

" If a man have light fingers that he cannot charme,

" Which will pick men's pockets, and do such like harme,

" He must be let blood, in a scarfe weare his arme,

" And drink the *herb grace* in a posset luke-warme."

Steevens.

The following passage from Greene's *Quip for an Upstart Courtier*, will furnish the best reason for calling *rue* herb of grace o' Sundays: " — some of them smil'd and said, *Rue* was called

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rue with a difference.[7]—There 's a daisy:[8]—I would give you some violets; but they withered all, when my father died:[9]—They say, he made a good end, ——

Herbegrace, which though they scorned in their youth, they might wear in their age, and that it was never too late to say *miserere*." *Henley*.

Herb of grace was not the *Sunday name*, but the *every day* name of *rue*. In the common Dictionaries of Shakspeare's time it is called *herb of grace*. See Florio's *Italian Dictionary*, 1598, in v. *ruta*, and Cotgrave's *French Dictionary*, 1611, in v. *rue*. There is no ground, therefore, for supposing with Dr. Warburton, that *rue* was called herb of grace, from its being used in exorcisms performed in churches on Sundays.

Ophelia only means, I think, that the Queen may with peculiar propriety on *Sundays*, when she solicits pardon for that crime which she has so much occasion to *rue* and repent of, call her rue, *herb of grace*. So, in *King Richard II*:

" Here did she drop a tear; here in this place
" I 'll set a bank of *rue*, sour *herb of grace*.
" *Rue*, even for *ruth*, here shortly shall be seen,
" In the remembrance of a weeping queen."

Ophelia, after having given the Queen *rue* to remind her of the *sorrow* and *contrition* she ought to feel for her incestuous marriage, tells her, she may wear it with a *difference*, to distinguish it from that worn by Ophelia herself; because her tears flowed from the loss of a father, those of the Queen ought to flow for her guilt. *Malone*.

[7] —— *you may wear your rue* with a difference.] This seems to refer to the rules of heraldry, where the younger brothers of a family bear the same arms *with a difference*, or mark of distinction. So, in Holinshed's *Reign of King Richard II*, p. 443: "— because he was the youngest of the Spensers, he bare a border gules for a *difference*."

There may, however, be somewhat more implied here than is expressed. *You, madam*, (says Ophelia to the Queen) *may call your* RUE *by its Sunday name*, HERB OF GRACE, *and so wear it with a difference to distinguish it from mine, which can never be any thing but merely* RUE, i. e. *sorrow*. *Steevens*.

[8] *There 's a* daisy:] Greene, in his *Quip for an Upstart Courtier*, has explained the significance of this flower: "— Next them grew the DISSEMBLING DAISIE, to warne such light-of-love wenches not to trust every faire promise that such amorous bachelors make them." *Henley*.

[9] *I would give you some violets; but they wither'd all, when my father died:*] So, in Bion's beautiful elegy on the death of Adonis:

" —— πάντα σὺν αὔτῳ

" Ὡς τῖνος τέθνακε, καὶ Ἀνθία πάντ' ἰμαράνθη." *Todd*.

The violet is thus characterized in the old collection of Sonnets above quoted, printed in 1584:

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For bonny sweet Robin is all my joy,[1]— [Sings.

Laer. Thought and affliction,[2] passion, hell itself,
She turns to favour, and to prettiness.

Oph. *And will he not come again?* [Sings.
And will he not come again?
No, no, he is dead,
"Go to thy death-bed, *Gone to his*
He never will come again.

His beard was white as snow,[3]
All flaxen was his poll:
He is gone, he is gone,
And we cast away moan;
God 'a mercy on his soul!

And of all christian souls![4] I pray God. God be wi' you!
[*Exit* Oph.

"*Violet* is for *faithfulnesse*,
"Which in me shall abide;
"Hoping likewise that from your heart
"You will not let it slide." *Malone.*

[1] *For bonny sweet Robin is all my joy,*] This is part of an old song, mentioned likewise by Beaumont and Fletcher, in *The Two Noble Kinsmen*, Act IV, sc. i:

"—— I can sing the broom,
"And *Bonny Robin.*"

In the books of the Stationers' Company, 26 April, 1594, is entered "A ballad, entituled, A doleful adewe to the last Erle of Darbie, to the tune of *Bonny sweet Robin.*" *Steevens.*

The "Courtly new ballad of the princely wooing of the faire maid of London, by King Edward," is also, "to the tune of *Bonny sweet Robin.*" *Ritson.*

[2] Thought *and affliction,*] *Thought* here, as in many other places, signifies melancholy. See *Antony and Cleopatra*, Act III, sc. xi, Vol XIII. *Malone.*

[3] *His beard was as white as snow*, &c.] This, and several circumstances in the character of Ophelia, seem to have been ridiculed in *Eastward Hoe*, a comedy, written by Ben Jonson, Chapman, and Marston, printed in 1605, Act III:

"His head as white as milk,
"All flaxen was his hair;
"But now he 's dead,
"And laid in his bed,
"And never will come again,
"God be at your labour!" *Steevens.*

[4] *God 'a mercy on his soul!*
And of all christian souls!] This is the common conclusion to many of the ancient monumental inscriptions. See Weever's *Fu-*

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Laer. Do you see this, O God?

King. Laertes, I must commune with your grief,[5]
Or you deny me right. Go but apart,
Make choice of whom your wisest friends you will,
And they shall hear and judge 'twixt you and me:
If by direct or by collateral hand
They find us touch'd, we will our kingdom give,
Our crown, our life, and all that we call ours,
To you in satisfaction; but, if not,
Be you content to lend your patience to us,
And we shall jointly labour with your soul
To give it due content.

Laer. Let this be so;
His means of death, his obscure funeral,—
No trophy, sword, nor hatchment, o'er his bones,[6]
No noble rite, nor formal ostentation,—
Cry to be heard, as 'twere from heaven to earth,
That I must call 't in question.

King. So you shall;
And, where the offence is, let the great axe fall.
I pray you, go with me. [*Exeunt.*

neral Monuments, p. 657, 658. Berthelette, the publisher of Gower's *Confessio Amantis*, 1554, speaking first of the funeral of Chaucer, and then of Gower, says: "— he lieth buried in the monasterie of Seynt Peter's at Westminster, &c. *On whose soules and all christen, Jesu have mercie.*" *Steevens.*

[5] —— commune *with your grief,*] The folio reads—*common.* To *common* is to *commune.* This word, pronounced as anciently spelt, is still in frequent provincial use. So, in *The Last Voyage of Captaine Frobisher*, by Dionyse Settle, 12mo. bl. l. 1577: "Our Generall, repayred with the ship boat to *common* or sign with them." Again, in Holinshed's account of Jack Cade's insurrection: "— to whome were sent from the king the archbishop &c. to *common* with him of his griefs and requests." *Steevens.*

[6] *No trophy, sword, nor hatchment, o'er his bones,*] It was the custom, in the times of our author, to hang a sword over the grave of a knight. *Johnson.*

This practice is uniformly kept up to this day. Not only the sword, but the helmet, gauntlet, spurs, and tabard (i. e. a coat whereon the armorial ensigns were anciently depicted, from whence the term *coat of armour,*) are hung over the grave of every knight. *Sir J. Hawkins.*

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SCENE VI.

Another Room in the same.

Enter HORATIO, *and a* Servant.

Hor. What are they, that would speak with me?
Serv. Sailors, sir;
They say, they have letters for you.
Hor. Let them come in.—
[*Exit* Serv.
I do not know from what part of the world
I should be greeted, if not from lord Hamlet.

Enter Sailors.

1 *Sail.* God bless you, sir.

Hor. Let him bless thee too.

1 *Sail.* He shall, sir, an 't please him. There 's a letter for you, sir; it comes from the ambassador that was bound for England; if your name be Horatio, as I am let to know it is.

Hor. [*reads*] Horatio, *when thou shalt have overlooked this, give these fellows some means to the king; they have letters for him. Ere we were two days old at sea, a pirate of very warlike appointment gave us chace: Finding ourselves too slow of sail, we put on a compelled valour; and in the grapple I boarded them: on the instant, they got clear of our ship; so I alone became their prisoner. They have dealt with me, like thieves of mercy; but they knew what they did; I am to do a good turn for them. Let the king have the letters I have sent; and repair thou to me with as much haste as thou would'st fly death. I have words to speak in thine ear, will make thee dumb; yet are they much too light for the bore of the matter.*[7] *These good fellows will bring thee where I am.* Rosencrantz *and* Guildenstern *hold their course for England: of them I have much to tell thee. Farewel.*

He that thou knowest thine, Hamlet.

Come, I will give you way for these your letters;
And do 't the speedier, that you may direct me
To him from whom you brought them. [*Exeunt.*

[7] —— *for the* bore *of the matter,*] The *bore* is the caliber of a gun, or the capacity of the barrel. *The matter* (says Hamlet) *would carry heavier words. Johnson.*

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SCENE VII.

Another Room in the same.

Enter King *and* LAERTES.

King. Now must your conscience my acquittance seal,
And you must put me in your heart for friend;
Sith you have heard, and with a knowing ear,
That he, which hath your noble father slain,
Pursu'd my life.

Laer. It well appears:—But tell me,
Why you proceeded not against these feats,
So crimeful and so capital in nature,
As by your safety, greatness, wisdom, all things else,
You mainly were stirr'd up.

King. O, for two special reasons;
Which may to you, perhaps, seem much unsinew'd,
But yet to me they are strong. The queen, his mother,
Lives almost by his looks; and for my self,
(My virtue, or my plague, be it either which,)
She is so conjunctive to my life and soul,
That, as the star moves not but in his sphere,
I could not but by her. The other motive,
Why to a publick count I might not go,
Is, the great love the general gender[8] bear him:
Who, dipping all his faults in their affection,
Work like the spring[9] that turneth wood to stone,

[8] —— *the general gender* —] The *common race* of the people. *Johnson.*

[9] Work *like the spring* &c.] This simile is neither very seasonable in the deep interest of this conversation, nor very accurately applied. If the *spring* had changed base metals to gold, the thought had been more proper. *Johnson.*

The folio, instead of—*work*, reads—*would.*

The same comparison occurs in Churchyard's *Choice:*

" So there is *wood* that water turns to *stones.*"

In Thomas Lupton's *Third Book of Notable Thinges*, 4to. bl. l. there is also mention of " a well, that whatsoever is throwne into the same, is *turned into a stone.*"

This, however, we learn from Ovid, is no modern supposition:

" Flumen habent Cicones, quod potum saxea reddit
" Viscera, quod tactis inducit marmora rebus."

See also, Hackluyt, Vol. I, p. 565. *Steevens.*

The allusion here is to the qualities still ascribed to the droping well at Knaresborough in Yorkshire. Camden (edit. 1590, p.

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Convert his gyves to graces; so that my arrows,
Too slightly timber'd for so loud a wind,[1]
Would have reverted to my bow again,
And not where I had aim'd them.

Laer. And so have I a noble father lost;
A sister driven into desperate terms;
Whose worth, if praises may go back again,[2]
Stood challenger on mount of all the age
For her perfections:—But my revenge will come.

King. Break not your sleeps for that: you must not think,
That we are made of stuff so flat and dull,
That we can let our beard be shook with danger,[3]
And think it pastime. You shortly shall hear more:
I loved your father, and we love ourself;
And that, I hope, will teach you to imagine,—
How now? what news?[4]

Enter a Messenger.

Mess. Letters, my lord, from Hamlet:[5]
This to your majesty; this to the queen.

564,) thus mentions it: "Sub quo fons est in quem ex impendentibus rupibus aquæ guttatim distillant, unde DROPPING WELL, vocant, in quem *quicquid ligni immittitur, lapideo cortice brevi obduci & lapidescere observatum est.*" *Reed.*

[1] ——*for so* loud a wind,] Thus the folio. The quarto, 1604, reads—for so *loued arm'd.* If these words have any meaning, it should seem to be—The instrument of offence I employ, would have proved too weak to injure one who is so *loved and arm'd* by the affection of the people. Their love, like *armour*, would revert the arrow to the bow.

The reading in the text, however, is supported in Acham's *Toxophilus*, edit. 1589, p. 57: "Weake bowes and *lighte shaftes* cannot stand in a *rough winde.*" *Steevens.*

Loued arm'd is as extraordinary a corruption as any that is found in these plays. *Malone.*

[2] —— *if praises may go back again,*] If I may praise what has been, but is now to be found no more. *Johnson.*

[3] *That we can let our beard be shook with danger,*] It is wonderful that none of the advocates for the learning of Shakspeare have told us that this line is imitated from Persius, Sat. ii:

"Idcirco stolidam præbet tibi vellere barbam
"Jupiter?" *Steevens.*

[4] *How now?* &c.] Omitted in the quartos. *Theobald.*

[5] *Letters,* &c.] Omitted in the quartos. *Steevens.*

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King. From Hamlet! who brought them?
Mess. Sailors, my lord, they say: I saw them not;
They were given me by Claudio, he receiv'd them
Of him that brought them.[6]
King. Laertes, you shall hear them:—
Leave us. [*Exit* Mess.
[Reads.] *High and mighty, you shall know, I am set naked on your kingdom. To-morrow shall I beg leave to see your kingly eyes: when I shall, first asking your pardon thereunto, recount the occasion of my sudden and more strange return.* Hamlet.
What should this mean? Are all the rest come back?
Or is it some abuse, and no such thing?
Laer. Know you the hand?
King. 'Tis Hamlet's character. *Naked,*—
And, in a postscript here, he says, *alone:*
Can you advise me?
Laer. I am lost in it, my lord. But let him come;
It warms the very sickness in my heart,
That I shall live and tell him to his teeth,
Thus diddest thou.
King. If it be so, Laertes,—
As how should it be so?—how otherwise?—
Will you be rul'd by me?
Laer. Ay, my lord;
So you will not o'er-rule me to a peace.
King. To thine own peace. If he be now return'd,—
As checking at his voyage,[7] and that he means
No more to undertake it,—I will work him
To an exploit, now ripe in my device,
Under the which he shall not choose but fall:

[6] *Of him that brought them.*] I have restored this hemistich from the quartos. *Steevens.*

[7] *As* checking *at his voyage,*] The phrase is from falconry; and may be justified from the following passage in Hinde's *Eliosto Libidinoso*, 1606: "— For who knows not, quoth she, that this hawk, which comes now so fair to the fist, may to-morrow *check* at the lure?"
Again, in G. Whetstone's *Castle of Delight*, 1576:
"But as the hawke, to gad which knowes the way,
"Will hardly leve to *checke* at carren crowes," &c. *Steevens.*
As checking *at his voyage,*] Thus the folio. The quarto, 1604, exhibits a corruption similar to that mentioned in n. 1, in the preceding page. It reads:—As *the king* at his voyage. *Malone.*

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And for his death no wind of blame shall breathe;
But even his mother shall uncharge the practice,
And call it, accident.

Laer.[8] My lord, I will be rul'd;
The rather, if you could devise it so,
That I might be the organ.

King. It falls right.
You have been talk'd of since your travel much,
And that in Hamlet's hearing, for a quality
Wherein, they say, you shine: your sum of parts
Did not together pluck such envy from him,
As did that one; and that, in my regard,
Of the unworthiest siege.[9]

Laer. What part is that, my lord?

King. A very ribband in the cap of youth,
Yet needful too; for youth no less becomes
The light and careless livery that it wears,
Than settled age his sables, and his weeds,
Importing health and graveness.[1]—Two months since,
Here was a gentleman of Normandy,—
I have seen myself, and serv'd against, the French,
And they can well on horseback: but this gallant
Had witchcraft in 't; he grew unto his seat;
And to such wond'rous doing brought his horse,
As he had been incorps'd and demi-natur'd
With the brave beast:[2] so far he topp'd my thought,

[8] *Laer*, &c.] The next sixteen lines are omitted in the folio. *Steevens.*

[9] *Of the unworthiest* siege.] Of the lowest rank. *Siege*, for *seat, place. Johnson.*
So, in *Othello:*
" ——— I fetch my birth
" From men of royal *siege.*" *Steevens.*

[1] Importing health *and graveness.*] *Importing* here may be, not *inferring* by logical consequence, but *producing* by physical effect. A young man regards show in his dress, an old man, *health. Johnson.*
Importing health, I apprehend, means, *denoting an attention to health. Malone.*
Importing may only signify—*implying, denoting.* So, in *King Henry VI*, P. I:
" Comets, *importing* change of times and states."
Mr. Malone's explanation, however, may be the true one. *Steevens.*

[2] *As he had been incorps'd and demi-natur'd*
With the brave beast:] This is from Sidney's *Arcadia*, B. II:

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That I, in forgery of shapes and tricks,[3]
Come short of what he did.
Laer. A Norman, was 't?
King. A Norman.
Laer. Upon my life, Lamord.[4]
King. The very same.
Laer. I know him well: he is the brooch, indeed,
And gem of all the nation.
King. He made confession of you;
And gave you such a masterly report,
For art and exercise in your defence,[5]
And for your rapier most especial,
That he cried out, 'twould be a sight indeed,
If one could match you: the scrimers[6] of their nation,
He swore, had neither motion, guard, nor eye,
If you oppos'd them: Sir, this report of his
Did Hamlet so envenom with his envy,
That he could nothing do, but wish and beg
Your sudden coming o'er, to play with you.
Now, out of this, ——
Laer. What out of this, my lord?
King. Laertes, was your father dear to you?
Or are you like the painting of a sorrow,
A face without a heart?
Laer. Why ask you this?
King. Not that I think, you did not love your father;
But that I know, love is begun by time;[7]

" As if, Centaur-like, he had been one peece with the horse." *Steevens.*

[3] —— *in forgery of shapes and tricks,*] I could not contrive so many proofs of dexterity as he could perform. *Johnson.*

[4] *Lamord.*] Thus the quarto, 1604. Shakspeare, I suspect, wrote *Lamode.* See the next speech but one. The folio has—*Lamound.* *Malone.*

[5] —— *in your defence,*] That is, in the *science of* defence. *Johnson.*

[6] —— *the* scrimers —] The *fencers.* *Johnson.*
From *escrimeur,* Fr. a fencer. *Malone.*
This unfavourable description of the French swordsmen is not in the folio. *Steevens.*

[7] —— *love is* begun *by time;*] This is obscure. The meaning may be, *love* is not innate in us, and co-essential to our nature, but begins at a certain time from some external cause, and eing always subject to the operations of time, suffers change and diminution. *Johnson.*

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And that I see, in passages of proof,[8]
Time qualifies the spark and fire of it.
There lives[9] within the very flame of love
A kind of wick, or snuff, that will abate it;
And nothing is at a like goodness still;
For goodness, growing to a plurisy,[1]

The King reasons thus:—"I do not suspect that you did not love your father; but I know that time abates the force of affection." I therefore suspect that we ought to read:

—— *love is* begone *by time;*

I suppose that Shakspeare places the syllable *be* before *gone*, as we say *be*-paint, *be*-spatter, *be*-think, &c. *M. Mason.*

[8] —— *passages of proof,*] In transactions of daily experience. *Johnson.*

[9] *There lives* &c.] The next ten lines are not in the folio. *Steevens.*

[1] *For goodness, growing to a plurisy,*] I would believe, for the honour of Shakspeare, that he wrote *plethory*. But I observe the dramatick writers of that time frequently call a fulness of blood a *plurisy*, as if it came, not from πλευρά, but from *plus, pluris*. *Warburton.*

I think the word should be spelt—*pluriey*. This passage is fully explained by one in Mascal's *Treatise on Cattle*, 1662, p. 187: "Against the blood, or *pluritie* of blood. The disease of blood is, some young horses will feed, and being fat will *increase* blood, and so *grow to a plurisie*, and *die*, thereof if he have not soon help." *Tollet.*

We should certainly read *plurisy*, as Tollet observes. Thus, in Massinger's *Unnatural Combat*, Malefort says—

"——— in a word,
"Thy *plurisy* of goodness is thy ill."

And again, in *The Picture*, Sophia says:

"A *plurisy* of blood you may let out," &c.

The word also occurs in *The Two Noble Kinsmen*. Arcite, in his invocation to Mars, says:

"——— that heal'st with blood
"The earth, when it is sick, and cur'st the world
"Of the *plurisy* of people!" *M. Mason.*

Dr. Warburton is right. The word is spelt *pluriey* in the quarto, 1604, and is used in the same sense as here, in *'Tis Pity She 's a Whore*, by Ford, 1633:

"Must your hot itch and *plurisie* of lust,
"The hey-day of your luxury, be fed
"Up to a surfeit?" *Malone.*

Mr. Pope introduced this simile in the *Essay on Criticism*, v. 303:

"For works may have more wit than does them good,
"*As bodies perish through excess of blood.*"

Ascham has a thought very similar to Pope's: "Twenty to one,

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Dies in his own too-much: That we would do,
We should do when we would; for this *would* changes,
And hath abatements and delays as many,
As there are tongues, are hands, are accidents;
And then this *should* is like a spendthrift sigh,
That hurts by easing.[2] But, to the quick o' the ulcer:

offend more, in writing too much, then to litle: *euen as twenty, fall into sickneese, rather by ouer much fulnes, then by any lacke, or emptinesse.*" *The Schole-Master*, 4to. bl. l. fol. 43. *H. White.*

[2] *And then this* should *is like a spendthrift* sigh,
That hurts by easing.] A *spendthrift sigh* is a *sigh* that makes an unnecessary waste of the vital flame. It is a notion very prevalent, that *sighs* impair the strength, and wear out the animal powers. *Johnson.*

So, in the *Governall of Helthe* &c. printed by Wynkyn de Worde: "And for why whan a man casteth out that noble humour too moche, he is hugely dyscolored, and his body moche febled, more then he lete four *sythes*, soo moche blode oute of his body." *Steevens.*

Hence they are called, in *King Henry VI*,—blood-consuming *sighs*. Again, in *Pericles*, 1609:

"Do not *consume* your *blood with sorrowing*."

The idea is enlarged upon in Fenton's *Tragical Discourses*, 1579: "Why staye you not in tyme the source of your scorching *sighes*, that have already drayned your body of his wholesome humoures, appoynted by nature to gyve sucke to the entrals and inward parts of you?"

The original quarto, as well as the folio, reads—a spendthrift's sigh; but I have no doubt that it was a corruption, arising from the first letter of the following word *sigh*, being an *s*. I have, therefore, with the other modern editors, printed *spendthrift* sigh, following a late quarto, (which however is of no authority) printed in 1611. That a sigh, if it consumes the blood, *hurts us by easing*, or is prejudicial to us on the whole, though it affords a temporary relief, is sufficiently clear: but the former part of the line, *and then this should*, may require a little explanation. I suppose the King means to say, that if we do not promptly execute that we are convinced we *should* or ought to do, we shall afterwards in vain repent our not having seized the fortunate moment for action: and this opportunity which we have let go by us, and the reflection that we *should* have done that, which, from supervening accidents, it is no longer in our power to do, is as prejudicial and painful to us as a blood-consuming sigh, that at once hurts and eases us.

I apprehend the poet meant to compare such a conduct, and the consequent reflection, *only* to the *pernicious* quality which he supposed to be annexed to sighing, and not to the temporary ease which it affords. His similes, as I have frequently had occasion to observe, seldom run on four feet. *Malone.*

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Hamlet comes back; What would you undertake,
To show yourself in deed your father's son
More than in words?

Laer. To cut his throat i' the church.

King. No place, indeed, should murder sanctuarize;
Revenge should have no bounds. But, good Laertes,
Will you do this, keep close within your chamber:
Hamlet, return'd, shall know you are come home:
We 'll put on those shall praise your excellence,
And set a double varnish on the fame
The Frenchman gave you; bring you, in fine, together,
And wager o'er your heads: he, being remiss,[3]
Most generous, and free from all contriving,
Will not peruse the foils; so that, with ease,
Or with a little shuffling, you may choose
A sword unbated,[4] and, in a pass of practice,[5]

[3] —— *he, being remiss,*] He being not vigilant or cautious. *Johnson.*

[4] *A sword* unbated,] i. e. not blunted as foils are. Or, as one edition has it, *embaited* or *envenomed*. *Pope.*

There is no such reading as *embaited* in any edition. In Sir Thomas North's translation of Plutarch, it is said of one of the *Metelli*, that "shewed the people the cruel fight of fencers, at *unrebated* swords." *Steevens.*

Not blunted, as foils are by a button fixed to the end. So, in *Love's Labour 's Lost:*

"That honour, which shall *bate* his scythe's keen edge." *Malone.*

[5] —— *a pass of* practice,] *Practice* is often by Shakspeare, and other writers, taken for an *insidious stratagem*, or *privy* treason, a sense not incongruous to this passage, where yet I rather believe, that nothing more is meant than a *thrust for exercise.* *Johnson.*

So, in *Look about You*, 1600:

"I pray God there be no *practice* in this change."

Again:

"—— the man is like to die:
"*Practice*, by th' mass, *practice* by the &c.——
"*Practice*, by the Lord, *practice*, I see it clear."

Again, more appositely, in our author's *Twelfth Night*, Act V, sc. ult:

"This *practice* hath most shrewdly *pass'd* upon thee." *Steevens.*

A pass of practice is a *favourite pass*, one that Laertes was well practised in.—In *Much Ado about Nothing*, Hero's father says:

"I 'll prove it on his body, if he dare,
"Despite his nice fence, and his active *practice*."

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Requite him for your father.
Laer. I will do 't:
And, for the purpose, I 'll anoint my sword.
I bought an unction of a mountebank,
So mortal, that, but dip a knife in it,
Where it draws blood no cataplasm so rare,
Collected from all simples that have virtue
Under the moon, can save the thing from death,
That is but scratch'd withal: I 'll touch my point
With this contagion; that, if I gall him slightly,
It may be death.[6]
King. Let 's further think of this;
Weigh, what convenience, both of time and means,
May fit us to our shape:[7] if this should fail,
And that our drift look through our bad performance,
'Twere better not assay'd; therefore, this project
Should have a back, or second, that might hold,
If this should blast in proof.[8] Soft;—let me see:—
We 'll make a solemn wager on your cunnings,—
I ha't:
When in your motion you are hot and dry,
(As make your bouts more violent to that end)
And that he calls for drink, I 'll have preferr'd him,[9]

The treachery on this occasion, was his using a sword *unbated* and *envenomed*. *M. Mason.*

[6] *It may be death.*] It is a matter of surprise, that no one of Shakspeare's numerous and able commentators has remarked, with proper warmth and detestation, the villainous assassin-like treachery of Laertes in this horrid plot. There is the more occasion that he should be here pointed out an object of abhorrence, as he is a character we are, in some preceding parts of the play, led to respect and admire. *Ritson.*

[7] *May fit us to our shape:*] May *enable* us to *assume proper characters*, and to act our part. *Johnson.*

[8] —— *blast in proof.*] This, I believe, is a metaphor taken from a mine, which, in the proof or execution, sometimes breaks out with an ineffectual *blast*. *Johnson.*

The word *proof* shows the metaphor to be taken from the trying or proving fire-arms or cannon, which often *blast* or *burst* in the *proof*. *Steevens.*

[9] —— *I 'll have* preferr'd him —] i. e. presented to him. Thus the quarto, 1604. The word indeed is mispelt, *prefard*. The folio reads—I 'll have *prepar'd* him. *Malone.*

To *prefer*, (as Mr. Malone observes) certainly means—to *present*, *offer*, or *bring forward*. So, in *Timon of Athens:*

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A chalice for the nonce; whereon but sipping,
If he by chance escape your venom'd stuck,[1]
Our purpose may hold there. But stay, what noise?[2]

Enter Queen.

How now, sweet queen?[3]

Queen. One woe doth tread upon another's heel,[4]
So fast they follow:—Your sister 's drown'd, Laertes.

Laer. Drown'd! O, where!

Queen. There is a willow grows ascaunt the brook,[5]
That shows his hoar leaves in the glassy stream;
Therewith fantastick garlands did she make

" Why then *preferr'd* you not your sums and bills?"
Steevens.

[1] *If he by chance escape your venom'd* stuck,] For *stuck*, read *tuck*, a common name for a *rapier*. *Blackstone.*

Your venom'd *stuck* is, your venom'd thrust. *Stuck* was a term of the fencing-school. So, in *Twelfth Night:* " — and he gives me the *stuck* with such a mortal motion, —." Again, in *The Return from Parnassus*, 1606: " Here is a fellow, Judicio, that carried the deadly *stocke* in his pen."—See Florio's *Italian Dict.* 1598: " *Stoccata*, a foyne, a thrust, a *stoccado* given in fence."
Malone.

[2] —— *But stay, what noise?*] I have recovered this from the quartos. *Steevens.*

[3] *How* now, *sweet queen?*] These words are not in the quarto. The word *now*, which appears to have been omitted by the carelessness of the transcriber or compositor, was supplied by the editor of the second folio. *Malone.*

[4] *One woe doth tread upon another's heel,*] A similar thought occurs in *Pericles, Prince of Tyre*, 1609:

" One sorrow never comes, but brings an heir,
" That may succeed as his inheritor." *Steevens.*

Again, in Drayton's *Mortimeriados*, 4to. 1596:

" —— miseries, which seldom come alone,
" Thick on the neck one of another fell."

Again, in Shakspeare's 131st Sonnet:

" A thousand groans, but thinking on thy fall,
" One on another's neck, ——." *Malone.*

Again, in *Locrine*, 1595:

" One mischief follows on *another's* neck."

And this also is the first line of a queen's speech on a lady's drowning herself. *Ritson.*

[5] —— ascaunt *the brook,*] Thus the quartos. The folio reads *aslant*. *Ascaunce* is interpreted in a note of Mr. Tyrwhitt's on Chaucer—*askew, aside, sideways*. *Steevens.*

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Of crow-flowers, nettles, daisies, and long purples,[6]
That liberal shepherds give a grosser name,
But our cold maids do dead men's fingers call them:
There on the pendent boughs her coronet weeds
Clambering to hang, an envious sliver broke;
When down her weedy trophies, and herself,
Fell in the weeping brook. Her clothes spread wide;
And, mermaid-like, a while they bore her up:
Which time, she chanted snatches of old tunes;[8]
As one incapable of her own distress,[9]
Or like a creature native and indu'd
Unto that element:[1] but long it could not be,

[6] —— *and* long purples,] By *long purples* is meant a plant, the modern botanical name of which is *orchis morio mas*, anciently *testiculus morionis*. The *grosser name* by which it passes, is sufficiently known in many parts of England, and particularly in the county where Shakspeare lived. Thus far, Mr. Warner. Mr. Collins adds, that in Sussex it is still called *dead men's hands*; and that in Lyte's *Herbal*, 1578, its various names, too gross for repetition, are preserved.

Dead men's thumbs are mentioned in an ancient bl. l. ballad, entitled *The deceased Maiden Lover:*

" Then round the meddowes did she walke,
" Catching each flower by the stalke,
" Such as within the meddowes grew;
" As *dead mans thumbe*, and hare-bell blew." *Steevens.*

One of the grosser names of this plant Gertrude had a particular reason to avoid:—*the rampant widow.* *Malone.*

[7] —— *liberal* —] *Liberal* is free-spoken, licentious in language. So, in *Othello:* " Is he not a most profane and *liberal* counsellor?" Again, in *A Woman's a Weathercock*, by N. Field, 1612:

" —— Next that, the fame
" Of your neglect, and *liberal*-talking tongue,
" Which breeds my honour an eternal wrong." *Malone.*

[8] *Which time, she chanted snatches of old* tunes;] Fletcher, in his *Scornful Lady*, very invidiously ridicules this incident:

" I will run mad first, and if that get not pity,
" I 'll drown myself to a most dismal ditty." *Warburton.*

The quartos read—snatches of old *lauds*, i. e. *hymns.* *Steevens.*

[9] *As one* incapable *of her own distress,*] As one having no *understanding* or knowledge of her danger. See p. 144, n. 1. *Malone.*

That is, insensible. So, in *King Richard III:*

" *Incapable* and shallow innocents." *Ritson.*

[1] *Or like a creature native and* indu'd
Unto that element:] I do not think the word *indued* is sense in this place; and believe we should read *inured.*

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Till that her garments, heavy with their drink,
Pull'd the poor wretch from her melodious lay
To muddy death.[2]

Laer. Alas then, she is drown'd?

Queen. Drown'd, drown'd.

Laer. Too much of water hast thou, poor Ophelia,
And therefore I forbid my tears: But yet
It is our trick; nature her custom holds,
Let shame say what it will: when these are gone,
The woman will be out.[3]—Adieu, my lord!
I have a speech of fire, that fain would blaze,
But that this folly drowns it.[4] [*Exit.*

King. Let 's follow, Gertrude:
How much I had to do to calm his rage!
Now fear I, this will give it start again;
Therefore, let 's follow. [*Exeunt.*

Shakspeare seems to have forgot himself in this scene, as there is not a single circumstance in the relation of Ophelia's death, that induces us to think she had drowned herself intentionally. *M. Mason.*

As we are indued with certain original dispositions and propensities at our birth, Shakspeare here uses *indued* with great licentiousness, for formed by nature; clothed, endowed, or furnished, with properties suited to the element of water.

Our old writers used *indued* and *endowed* indiscriminately. "To indue," says Minsheu in his Dictionary, "sepissime refertur ad dotes animo infusas, quibus nimirum ingenium alicujus imbutum et initiatum est, unde et G. *instruire* est. L. *imbuere*. *Imbuere* proprie est inchoare et initiari."

In Cotgrave's French Dictionary, 1611, *instruire* is interpreted, "to fashion, to furnish with." *Malone.*

[2] *To muddy death.*] In the first scene of the next Act we find Ophelia buried with such rites as betoken she *foredid her own life*. It should be remembered, that the account here given, is that of a friend; and that the Queen could not possibly know what passed in the mind of Ophelia, when she placed herself in so perilous a situation. After the facts had been weighed and considered, the priest in the next Act pronounces, that *her death was doubtful*. *Malone.*

[3] *The* woman *will be out.*] i. e. tears will flow. So, in *King Henry V:*

"And all *the woman* came into my eyes." *Malone.*

See Vol. IX, p. 343, n. 4. *Steevens.*

[4] *But that this folly* drowns *it.*] Thus the quarto, 1604. The folio reads—But that this folly *doubts* it; i. e. *doubts*, or extinguishes it. See p. 51, n. 1. *Malone.*

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ACT V..... SCENE I.

A Church Yard.

Enter Two Clowns, *with Spades, &c.*

1 *Clo.* Is she to be buried in christian burial, that wilfully seeks her own salvation?

2 *Clo.* I tell thee, she is; therefore, make her grave straight:[5] the crowner hath set on her, and finds it christian burial.

1 *Clo.* How can that be, unless she drowned herself in her own defence?

2 *Clo.* Why, 'tis found so.

1 *Clo.* It must be *se offendendo;* it cannot be else. For here lies the point: If I drown myself wittingly, it argues an act: and an act hath three branches; it is, to act, to do, and to perform:[6] Argal, she drowned herself wittingly.

2 *Clo.* Nay, but hear you, goodman delver.

1 *Clo.* Give me leave. Here lies the water; good: here stands the man; good: If the man go to this water, and

[5] —— *make her grave* straight:] Make her grave from east to west in a direct line parallel to the church; not from north to south, athwart the regular line. This, I think, is meant. *Johnson.*

I cannot think that this means any more than make *her grave immediately.* She is to be buried in *christian burial,* and consequently the grave is to be made as usual. My interpretation may be justified from the following passage in *King Henry V,* and the play before us: " —— We cannot lodge and board a dozen or fourteen gentlewomen who live by the prick of their needles, but it will be thought we keep a bawdy-house *straight.*"

Again, in *Hamlet,* Act III, sc. iv:

" *Pol.* He will come *straight.*"

Again, in *The Lover's Progress,* by Beaumont and Fletcher:

" *Lis.* Do you fight *straight?*

" *Clar.* Yes presently."

Again, in *The Merry Wives of Windsor:*

" —— we'll come and dress you *straight.*"

Again, in *Othello:*

" Farewel, my Desdemona, I will come to thee *straight.*

Steevens.

Again, in *Troilus and Cressida:*

" Let us make ready *straight.*" *Malone.*

[6] —— *an act hath three branches; it is, to act, to do, and to perform:*] Ridicule on scholastick divisions without distinction; and of distinctions without difference. *Warburton.*

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drown himself, it is, will he, nill he, he goes; mark you that: but if the water come to him, and drown him, he drowns not himself: Argal, he, that is not guilty of his own death, shortens not his own life.

2 *Clo.* But is this law?

1 *Clo.* Ay, marry is 't; crowner's-quest law.

2 *Clo.* Will you ha' the truth on 't? If this had not been a gentlewoman, she should have been buried out of christian burial.

1 *Clo.* Why, there thou say'st: And the more pity; that great folks should have countenance in this world to drown or hang themselves, more than their even christian.[7] Come, my spade. There is no ancient gentlemen but gardeners, ditchers, and grave-makers; they hold up Adam's profession.

2 *Clo.* Was he a gentleman?

1 *Clo.* He was the first that ever bore arms.

2 *Clo.*[8] Why, he had none.

1 *Clo.* What, art a heathen? How dost thou understand the scripture? The scripture says, Adam digged; Could he dig without arms? I 'll put another question to thee: if thou answerest me not to the purpose, confess thyself ——[9]

[7] —— *their* even *christian.*] So, all the old books, and rightly. An old English expression for fellow-christian. *Thirlby.*

So, in Chaucer's *Jack Upland:* "If freres cannot or mow not excuse 'hem of these questions asked of 'hem, it seemeth that they be horrible giltie against God, and *ther even christian;*" &c.

Again, in Gower, *de Confessione Amantis,* Lib. V, fol. 102:

"Of beautie sighe he never hir *even.*"

Again, Chaucer's *Persones Tale:* "—— of his neighbour, that is to sayn, of his *even cristen,*" &c. This phrase also occurs frequently in the *Paston Letters.* See Vol. III, p. 421, &c. &c. "That is to say, in relieving and sustenance of your *even christen,*" &c.—Again: "—— to dispose and help your *even christen.*" *Steevens.*

So, King Henry Eighth, in his answer to Parliament in 1546: "—— you might say that I, beyng put in so speciall a trust as I am in this case, were no trustie frende to you, nor charitable man to mine *even christian,* —." Hall's *Chronicle,* fol. 261. *Malone.*

[8] 2 *Clo.*] This speech, and the next as far as—*without arms,* is not in the quartos. *Steevens.*

[9] —— *confess thyself*—] *and be hanged,* the Clown, I suppose, would have said, if he had not been interrupted. This was a common proverbial sentence. See *Othello,* Act IV, sc. i.—He might, however, have intended to say, *confess thyself an ass.* *Malone.*

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2 *Clo.* Go to.

1 *Clo.* What is he, that builds stronger than either the mason, the shipwright, or the carpenter?

2 *Clo.* The gallows-maker; for that frame outlives a thousand tenants.

1 *Clo.* I like thy wit well, in good faith; the gallows does well: But how does it well? it does well to those that do ill: now thou dost ill, to say, the gallows is built stronger than the church; argal, the gallows may do well to thee. To 't again; come.

2 *Clo.* Who builds[1] stronger than a mason, a shipwright, or a carpenter?

1 *Clo.* Ay, tell me that, and unyoke.[2]

2 *Clo.* Marry, now I can tell.

1 *Clo.* To 't.

2 *Clo.* Mass, I cannot tell.

Enter HAMLET *and* HORATIO, *at a distance.*

1 *Clo.* Cudgel thy brains no more about it;[3] for your dull ass will not mend his pace with beating: and, when you are asked this question next, say, a grave-maker; the houses that he makes, last till doomsday. Go, get thee to Yaughan, and fetch me a stoup of liquor.

[*Exit* 2 Clo.

[1] *Who builds* &c.] The inquisitive reader may meet with an assemblage of such queries (which perhaps composed the chief festivity of our ancestors by an evening fire) in a volume of very scarce tracts, preserved in the University Library, at Cambridge, D. 5. 2. The innocence of these *Demaundes Joyous* may deserve a praise which is not always due to their delicacy. *Steevens.*

[2] *Ay, tell me that, and unyoke.*] If it be not sufficient to say, with Dr. Warburton, that this phrase might be taken from husbandry, without much depth of reading, we may produce it from a dittie of the workmen of Dover, preserved in the additions to Holinshed, p. 1546:

"My bow is broke, I would *unyoke*,
"My foot is sore, I can worke no more." *Farmer.*

Again, in Drayton's *Polyolbion*, at the end of Song I:

"Here I 'll *unyoke* a while, and turn my steeds to meat."

Again, in P. Holland's translation of Pliny's *Natural History*, p. 593: "—— in the evening, and when thou dost *unyoke*." *Steevens.*

[3] *Cudgel thy brains no more about it:*] So, in *The Maydes Metamorphosis*, by Lyly, 1600:

"In vain I fear, *I beat my brains* about
"Proving by search to find my mistresse out." *Malone.*

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1 Clown digs, and sings.

In youth, when I did love, did love,[4]
Methought, it was very sweet,
To contract, O, the time, for, ah, my behove
O, methought, there was nothing meet.[5]

Ham. Has this fellow no feeling of his business? he sings at grave-making.

Hor. Custom hath made it in him a property of easiness.

Ham. 'Tis e'en so: the hand of little employment hath the daintier sense.

1 Clo. *But age, with his stealing steps,*
Hath claw'd me in his clutch,
And hath shipped me into the land,
As if I had never been such.[6]

[Throws up a scull.

Ham. That scull had a tongue in it, and could sing once: How the knave jowls it to the ground, as if it were Cain's jaw-bone, that did the first murder! This might be the pate of a politician, which this ass now o'er-reaches;[7] one that would circumvent God, might it not?

[4] *In youth, when I did love,* &c.] The three stanzas, sung here by the Grave-Digger, are extracted, with a slight variation, from a little poem, called *The Aged Lover renounceth Love,* written by Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey, who flourished in the reign of King Henry VIII, and who was beheaded 1547, on a strained accusation of treason. *Theobald.*

[5] *To contract, O, the time, for,* ah, *my behove*
O, methought, there was nothing meet.] This passage, as it stands, is absolute nonsense; but if we read "for *aye,*" instead of "for *ah*" it will have some kind of sense, as it may mean, "that it was not meet, though he was in love, to contract himself *for ever.*" *M. Mason.*

Dr. Percy is of opinion that the different corruptions in these stanzas, might have been "designed by the poet himself, the better to paint the character of an illiterate clown."

Behove is interest, convenience. So, in the 4th Book of Phaer's version of the *Æneid*:

"—— wilt for thyne own *behove.*" *Steevens.*

—— *nothing meet.*] Thus the folio. The quarto, 1604, reads: *O methought there* a *was nothing* a *meet. Malone.*

[6] *As if I had never been such.*] Thus, in the original:

"For age with stealing steps
"Hath claude me with his crowch;
"And lusty youthe away he leapes,
"As there had bene none such." *Steevens.*

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Hor. It might, my lord.

Ham. Or of a courtier; which could say, *Good-morrow, sweet lord! How dost thou, good lord?* This might be my lord such-a-one, that praised my lord such-a-one's horse, when he meant to beg it;[8] might it not?

Hor. Ay, my lord.

Ham. Why, e'en so: and now my lady Worm's;[9] chapless, and knocked about the mazzard with a sexton's spade: Here 's fine revolution, an we had the trick to see 't. Did these bones cost no more the breeding, but to play at loggats with them?[1] mine ache to think on 't.

[7] —— *which this ass now* o'er-reaches;] The folio reads—*o'er offices. Steevens.*

In the quarto, [1604] for *over-offices* is *over-reaches*, which agrees better with the sentence: it is a strong exaggeration to remark, that an *ass* can *over-reach* him who would once have tried to *circumvent* —. I believe, both these words were Shakspeare's. An author in revising his work, when his original ideas have faded from his mind, and new observations have produced new sentiments, easily introduces images which have been more newly impressed upon him, without observing their want of congruity to the general texture of his original design.

Johnson.

[8] *This might be my lord such-a-one, that praised my lord such-a-one's horse, when he meant to beg it;*] So, in *Timon of Athens*, Act I:

" —— my lord, you gave
" Good words the other day of a bay courser
" I rode on; it is yours, because you lik'd it." *Steevens.*

[9] —— *and now my lady Worm's;*] The scull that was *my lord Such-a-one's*, is now *my lady Worm's*. *Johnson.*

[1] —— *to play at* loggats *with them?*] This is a game played in several parts of England even at this time. A stake is fixed into the ground; those who play, throw *loggats* at it, and he that is nearest the stake, wins: I have seen it played in different counties at their sheep-shearing feasts, where the winner was entitled to a black fleece, which he afterwards presented to the farmer's maid to spin for the purpose of making a petticoat, and on condition that she knelt down on the fleece to be kissed by all the rusticks present.

So, Ben Jonson, *Tale of a Tub*, Act IV, sc. vi:

" Now are they tossing of his legs and arms,
" Like *loggats* at a pear-tree."

Again, in an old collection of Epigrams, Satires, &c.

" To play at *loggats*, nine holes, or ten pinnes."

Again, in Decker's *If this be not a good Play, the Devil is in it*, 1612:

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1 Clo. *A pick-axe, and a spade, a spade,* [Sings.
For—and a shrouding sheet:
O, a pit of clay for to be made
For such a guest is meet.[2] [Throws up a scull.

Ham. There 's another: Why may not that be the scull of a lawyer? Where be his quiddits[3] now, his quillets,[4] his cases, his tenures, and his tricks? why does he suffer this rude knave now to knock him about the sconce[5] with a dirty shovel, and will not tell him of his

" —— two hundred crowns!
" I 've lost as much at *loggats*."

It is one of the unlawful games enumerated in the statute of 33 of Henry VIII. *Steevens.*

Loggeting in the fields is mentioned for the first time among other " *new* and crafty games and plays," in the statute of 33 Henry VIII, c. 9. Not being mentioned in former acts against unlawful games, it was probably not practised long before the statute of Henry the Eighth was made. *Malone.*

A *loggat*-ground, like a skittle-ground, is strewed with ashes, but is more extensive. A bowl much larger than the jack of the game of bowls is thrown first. The pins, which I believe are called *loggats*, are much thinner, and lighter at one extremity than the other. The bowl being first thrown, the players take the pins up by the thinner and lighter end, and fling them towards the bowl, and in such a manner that the pins may once turn round in the air, and slide with the thinner extremity foremost towards the bowl. The pins are about one or two-and twenty inches long. *Blount.*

[2] *For such a guest is meet.*] Thus in the original:
A pick-axe and a spade,
And eke a shrowding sheet;
A house of clay for to be made,
For such a guest most meet. *Steevens.*

[3] —— *quiddits* &c.] i. e. subtilties. So, in *Soliman and Perseda:*
" I am wise, but *quiddits* will not answer death." *Steevens.*
Again, in Drayton's *Owle*, 4to. 1604:
" By some strange *quiddit*, or some wrested clause,
" To find him guiltie of the breach of lawes." *Malone.*

[4] —— *his* quillets,] So, in *Ram-Alley, or Merry Tricks*, 1611:
" Nay, good Sir Throat, forbear your *quillits* now."
Steevens.
Quillets are nice and frivolous distinctions. The word is rendered by Cole, in his *Latin Dictionary*, 1679, *res frivola*. *Malone.*

[5] —— *the sconce* —] i. e. the head. So, in Lyly's *Mother Bombie*, 1594:
" Laudo ingenium; I like thy *sconce*."

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action of battery? Humph! This fellow might be in 's time a great buyer of land, with his statutes,[6] his recognizances, his fines, his double vouchers,[7] his recoveries: Is this the fine of his fines, and the recovery of his recoveries,[8] to have his fine pate full of fine dirt? will his vouchers vouch him no more of his purchases, and double ones too, than the length and breadth of a pair of indentures? The very conveyances of his lands will hardly lie in this box; and must the inheritor himself have no more? ha?

Hor. Not a jot more, my lord.

Ham. Is not parchment made of sheep-skins?

Hor. Ay, my lord, and of calves-skins too.

Ham. They are sheep, and calves, which seek out assurance in that.[9] I will speak to this fellow:—Whose grave 's this, sirrah?

1 *Clo.* Mine, sir.—

O, a pit of clay for to be made [Sings.
For such a guest is meet.

Ham. I think it be thine, indeed; for thou liest in 't.

Again, in *Ram-Alley, or Merry Tricks*, 1611:

" ——————— I say no more;

" But 'tis within this *sconce* to go beyond them." *Steevens.*

See *Comedy of Errors*, Act I, sc. iv, Vol. VI. *Malone.*

[6] —— *his* statutes,] By a statute is here meant, not an act of parliament, but a species of security for money, affecting real property; whereby the lands of the debtor are conveyed to the creditor, till out of the rents and profits of them his debt may be satisfied. *Malone.*

[7] —— *his* double vouchers, &c.] A recovery with *double voucher* is the one usually suffered, and is so denominated from *two* persons (the latter of whom is always the common cryer, or some such inferior person,) being successively *voucher*, or called upon, to warrant the tenant's title. Both *fines* and *recoveries* are fictions of law, used to convert an estate tail into a fee simple. *Statutes* are (not acts of parliament, but) *statutes-merchant* and *staple*, particular modes of *recognizance* or acknowledgment for securing *debts*, which thereby become a charge upon the party's land. *Statutes* and *recognizances* are constantly mentioned together in the covenants of a purchase deed. *Ritson.*

[8] *Is this the fine of his fines, and the recovery of his recoveries,*] Omitted in the quartos. *Steevens.*

[9] —— assurance *in that.*] A quibble is intended. Deeds, which are usually written on parchment, are called the common *assurances* of the kingdom. *Malone.*

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1 *Clo.* You lie out on 't, sir, and therefore it is not yours: for my part, I do not lie in 't, yet it is mine.

Ham. Thou dost lie in 't, to be in 't, and say it is thine: 'tis for the dead, not for the quick; therefore thou liest.

1 *Clo.* 'Tis a quick lie, sir; 'twill away again, from me to you.

Ham. What man dost thou dig it for?

1 *Clo.* For no man, sir.

Ham. What woman then?

1 *Clo.* For none neither.

Ham. Who is to be buried in 't?

1 *Clo.* One that was a woman, sir; but, rest her soul, she 's dead.

Ham. How absolute the knave is! we must speak by the card,[1] or equivocation will undo us. By the lord, Horatio, these three years I have taken note of it; the age is grown so picked,[2] that the toe of the peasant comes so

[1] —— *by the* card,] The *card* is the paper on which the different points of the compass were described. *To do any thing by the card*, is, *to do it with nice observation.* *Johnson.*

The *card* is a *sea-chart*, still so termed by mariners: and the word is afterwards used by Osric in the same sense. Hamlet's meaning will therefore be, we must speak *directly forward in a straight line*, plainly to the point. *Ritson.*

So, in *Macbeth*:

" And the very ports they blow, &c.

" In the shipman's *card*." *Steevens.*

—— *by the* card,] i. e. we must speak with the same precision and accuracy as is observed in marking the true distances of coasts, the heights, courses, &c. in a sea-*chart*, which in our poet's time was called a *card*. So, in *The Commonwealth and Government of Venice*, 4to. 1599, p. 177: " Sebastian Munster in his *carde* of Venice —." Again, in Bacon's *Essays*, p. 326, edit. 1740: " Let him carry with him also some *card*, or book, describing the country where he travelleth." In 1589 was published in 4to. *A briefe Discourse of* Mappes *and* Cardes, *and of their Uses*.—The " shipman's *card*" in *Macbeth*, is the paper on which the different points of the compass are described. *Malone.*

In every ancient sea-*chart* that I have seen, the compass, &c. was likewise introduced. *Steevens.*

[2] —— *the age is grown so* picked,] So *smart*, so *sharp*, says Sir T. Hanmer, very properly; but there was, I think, about that time, a *picked* shoe, that is, *a shoe with a long pointed toe*, in fashion, to which the allusion seems likewise to be made. *Every man now is smart; and every man now is a man of fashion.* *Johnson.*

This fashion of wearing shoes with long pointed toes was carried to such excess in England, that it was restrained at last by

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near the heel of the courtier, he galls his kibe.—How long hast thou been a grave-maker?

1 *Clo.* Of all the days i' the year, I came to 't that day that our last king Hamlet overcame Fortinbras.

Ham. How long 's that since?

1 *Clo.* Cannot you tell that? every fool can tell that: It was that very day that young Hamlet was born:[3] he that is mad, and sent into England.

Ham. Ay, marry, why was he sent into England?

1 *Clo.* Why, because he was mad: he shall recover his wits there; or, if he do not, 'tis no great matter there.

Ham. Why?

1 *Clo.* 'Twill not be seen in him there; there the men are as mad as he.

Ham. How came he mad?

1 *Clo.* Very strangely, they say.

Ham. How strangely?

1 *Clo.* 'Faith, e'en with losing his wits.

Ham. Upon what ground?

proclamation so long ago as the fifth year of Edward IV, when it was ordered, "that the beaks or pykes of shoes and boots should not pass two inches, upon pain of cursing by the clergy, and forfeiting twenty shillings, to be paid, one noble to the king, another to the cordwainers of London, and the third to the chamber of London:—and for others countries and towns the like order was taken.—Before this time, and since the year 1482, the pykes of shoes and boots were of such length, that they were fain to be tied up to the knee with chains of silver, and gilt, or at least silken laces." *Steevens.*

—— *the age is grown so* picked,] i. e. so spruce, so quaint, so affected. See Vol. IV, p. 101, n. 1; and Vol. VII, p. 296, n. 8.

There is, I think, no allusion to *picked* or pointed shoes, as has been supposed. *Picked* was a common word of Shakspeare's age, in the sense above given, and is found in Minsheu's Dictionary, 1617, with its original signification: "*Trimm'd* or drest sprucely." It is here used metaphorically. *Malone.*

I should have concurred with Mr. Malone in giving a general sense of the epithet—*picked*, but for Hamlet's mention of the *toe* of the peasant, &c. *Steevens.*

[3] —— *that young Hamlet was born:*] By this scene it appears that Hamlet was then thirty years old, and knew Yorick well, who had been dead twenty-two years. And yet in the beginning of the play he is spoken of as a *very young* man, one that designed to go back to school, i. e. to the University of Wittenberg. The poet in the fifth Act had forgot what he wrote in the first. *Blackstone.*

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1 *Clo.* Why, here in Denmark; I have been sexton here, man, and boy, thirty years.

Ham. How long will a man lie i' the earth ere he rot?

1 *Clo.* 'Faith if he be not rotten before he die, (as we have many pocky corses now-a-days,[4] that will scarce hold the laying in,) he will last you some eight year, or nine year: a tanner will last you nine year.

Ham. Why he more than another?

1 *Clo.* Why, sir, his hide is so tanned with his trade, that he will keep out water a great while; and your water is a sore decayer of your whoreson dead body. Here 's a scull now hath lain you i' the earth three-and-twenty years.

Ham. Whose was it?

1 *Clo.* A whoreson mad fellow's it was; Whose do you think it was?

Ham. Nay, I know not.

1 *Clo.* A pestilence on him for a mad rogue! he poured a flagon of Rhenish on my head once. This same scull, sir, was Yorick's scull,[5] the king's jester.

Ham. This? [*Takes the Scull.*

1 *Clo.* E'en that.

Ham. Alas, poor Yorick!—I knew him, Horatio; a fellow of infinite jest, of most excellent fancy: he hath borne me on his back a thousand times; and now, how abhorred in my imagination it is! my gorge rises at it. Here hung those lips, that I have kissed I know not how oft. Where be your gibes now? your gambols? your songs? your flashes of merriment, that were wont to set the table on a roar? Not one now, to mock your own grinning?[6] quite chap-fallen? Now get you to my lady's chamber,[7] and tell her, let her paint an inch thick, to this favour[8] she must come; make her laugh at that.—Pr'ythee, Horatio, tell me one thing.

[4] —— *now a-days,*] Omitted in the quarto. *Malone.*

[5] —— *Yorick's scull,*] Thus the folio. The quarto reads—*Sir* Yorick's scull. *Malone.*

[6] —— *your own* grinning?] Thus the quarto, 1604. The folio reads—your own *jeering?* In that copy, after this word, and *chap-fallen,* there is a note of interrogation, which all the editors have adopted. I doubt concerning its propriety. *Malone.*

[7] —— *my lady's* chamber,] Thus the folio. The quartos read—my lady's *table,* meaning, I suppose, her *dressing-table.* *Steevens.*

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Hor. What 's that, my lord?

Ham. Dost thou think, Alexander looked o' this fashion i' the earth?

Hor. E'en so.

Ham. And smelt so? pah! [*Throws down the Scull.*

Hor. E'en so, my lord.

Ham. To what base uses we may return, Horatio! Why may not imagination trace the noble dust of Alexander, till he find it stopping a bung-hole?

Hor. 'Twere to consider too curiously, to consider so.

Ham. No, faith, not a jot; but to follow him thither with modesty enough, and likelihood to lead it: As thus; Alexander died, Alexander was buried, Alexander returneth to dust; the dust is earth; of earth we make loam: And why of that loam, whereto he was converted, might they not stop a beer-barrel?

" Imperious Cæsar,[9] dead and turn'd to clay, quoted MS. 1632
Might stop a hole to keep the wind away:
O, that the earth, which kept the world in awe,
Should patch a wall to expel the winter's flaw![1] "

But soft! but soft! aside;—Here comes the king,

Enter Priests, *&c. in Procession; the Corpse of* OPHELIA, LAERTES, *and Mourners following;* King, Queen, *their Trains*, &c.

The queen, the courtiers: Who is this they follow? And with such maimed rites?[2] This doth betoken,

[8] —— *to this* favour —] i. e. to this countenance or complexion. *Malone.*

[9] Imperious *Cæsar,*] Thus the quarto, 1604. The editor of the folio substituted *imperial*, not knowing that imperious was used in the same sense. See Vol. XII, p. 152, n. 9; and *Cymbeline*, Act IV, sc. ii. There are other instances in the folio of a familiar term being substituted in the room of a more ancient word. See p. 252, n. 7. *Malone.*

[1] —— *winter's* flaw!] Winter's *blast*. *Johnson.*

So, in *Marius and Sylla*, 1594:

" —— no doubt this stormy *flaw*,
" That Neptune sent to cast us on this shore."

The quartos read—to expel the *water's* flaw. *Steevens.*

See Vol. X, p. 191, n. 8. A *flaw* meant a sudden gust of wind. So, in Florio's *Italian Dictionary*, 1598: " Groppo, a *flaw*, or berrie of wind." See also Cotgrave's *Dictionary*, 1611: " *Lis de vent*, a *gust* or *flaw* of wind." *Malone.*

[2] —— *maimed rites!*] Imperfect obsequies. *Johnson.*

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The corse, they follow, did with desperate hand
Fordo its own life.[3] 'Twas of some estate:[4]
Couch we a while, and mark. [*Retiring with* Hor.
Laer. What ceremony else?
Ham. That is Laertes,
A very noble youth: Mark.
Laer. What ceremony else?
1 *Priest.*[5] Her obsequies have been as far enlarg'd
As we have warranty:[6] Her death was doubtful;
And, but that great command o'ersways the order,
She should in ground unsanctified have lodg'd
Till the last trumpet; for charitable prayers,
Shards, flints, and pebbles, should be thrown on her:
Yet here she is allow'd her virgin crants,[7]

[3] Fordo *its own life.*] To *fordo* is to undo, to destroy. So, in *Othello:*

" —— this is the night
" That either makes me, or *fordoes* me quite."

Again, in *Acolastus*, a comedy, 1529: " —— wolde to God it might be leful for me to *fordoo* myself, or to make an ende of me." *Steevens.*

[4] —— *some estate:*] Some person of high rank. *Johnson.* See Vol. XII. p. 78, n. 5. *Malone.*

[5] 1 *Priest.*] This *Priest* in the old quarto is called *Doctor.* *Steevens.*

[6] *Her obsequies have been as far enlarg'd*
As we have warranty:] Is there any allusion here to the coroner's warrant, directed to the minister and church-wardens of a parish, and permitting the body of a person, who comes to an untimely end, to receive christian burial? *Whalley.*

[7] —— *allow'd her virgin* crants,] Evidently corrupted from *chants*, which is the true word. A *specific* rather than a *generic* term being here required to answer to *maiden strewments.* *Warburton.*

—— *allow'd her virgin* crants,] Thus the quarto, 1604. For this unusual word the editor of the first folio substituted *rites.* By a more attentive examination and comparison of the quarto copies and the folio, Dr. Johnson, I have no doubt, would have been convinced that this and many other changes in the folio were not made by Shakspeare, as is suggested in the following note. *Malone.*

I have been informed by an anonymous correspondent, that *crants* is the German word for *garlands*, and I suppose it was retained by us from the Saxons. To carry *garlands* before the bier of a maiden, and to hang them over her grave, is still the practice in rural parishes.

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Her maiden strewments, and the bringing home
Of bell and burial.[8]

Laer. Must there no more be done?

1 *Priest.* No more be done!
We should profane the service of the dead,
To sing a *requiem*,[9] and such rest to her
As to peace-parted souls.

Laer. Lay her i' the earth;—
And from her fair and unpolluted flesh,
May violets spring![1]—I tell thee, churlish priest,
A minist'ring angel shall my sister be,
When thou liest howling.

Ham. What, the fair Ophelia!

Queen. Sweets to the sweet: Farewel!
[*Scattering Flowers.*
I hop'd, thou should'st have been my Hamlet's wife;
I thought, thy bride-bed to have deck'd, sweet maid,
And not have strew'd thy grave.

Laer. O, treble woe
Fall ten times treble on that cursed head,
Whose wicked deed thy most ingenious sense
Depriv'd thee of!—Hold off the earth a while,
Till I have caught her once more in mine arms:
[*Leaps into the Grave.*

Crants therefore was the original word, which the author, discovering to be provincial, and perhaps not understood, changed to a term more intelligible, but less proper. *Maiden rites* give no certain or definitive image. He might have put *maiden wreaths*, or *maiden garlands*, but he perhaps bestowed no thought upon it; and neither genius nor practice will always supply a hasty writer with the most proper diction. *Johnson.*

In Minsheu's Dictionary, see *Beades*, where *roosen krants* means *sertum rosarium;* and such is the name of a character in this play. *Tollet.*

The names—*Rosenkrantz* and *Gyldenstiern* occur frequently in Rostgaard's *Deliciæ Poetarum Danorum*. *Steevens.*

[8] —— *bell and* burial.] *Burial*, here signifies interment in consecrated ground. *Warburton.*

[9] *To sing a* requiem,] A *requiem*, is a mass performed in Popish churches for the rest of the soul of a person deceased. The folio reads—sing *sage* requiem. *Steevens.*

[1] —— *from her fair and unpolluted flesh*
May violets spring!] Thus, *Persius*, Sat. I:
" —— e tumulo, fortunataque favilla,
" Nascentur violæ?" *Steevens.*

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Now pile your dust upon the quick and dead;
Till of this flat a mountain you have made,
To o'er-top old Pelion, or the skyish head
Of blue Olympus.

Ham. [*advancing*] What is he, whose grief
Bears such an emphasis? whose phrase of sorrow
Conjures the wand'ring stars, and makes them stand
Like wonder-wounded hearers? this is I,
Hamlet the Dane. [*Leaps into the Grave.*

Laer. The devil take thy soul!
[*Grappling with him.*

Ham. Thou pray'st not well.
I pr'ythee take thy fingers from my throat;
For, though I am not splenetive and rash,
Yet have I in me something dangerous,
Which let thy wisdom fear: Hold off thy hand.

King. Pluck them asunder.

Queen. Hamlet, Hamlet!

All.[2] Gentlemen, ——

Hor. Good my lord, be quiet.

[*The Attendants part them, and they come out of the Grave.*

Ham. Why, I will fight with him upon this theme,
Until my eyelids will no longer wag.

Queen. O my son! what theme?

Ham. I lov'd Ophelia; forty thousand brothers
Could not, with all their quantity of love
Make up my sum.—What wilt thou do for her?

King. O, he is mad, Laertes.

Queen. For love of God, forbear him.

Ham. 'Zounds, show me what thou 'lt do:
Woul't weep? woul't fight? woul't fast? woul't tear thyself?
Woul't drink up Esil? eat a crocodile?[3]

[2] *All.* &c.] This is restored from the quartos. *Steevens.*

[3] *Woul't drink up* Esil? *eat a crocodile?*] This word has through all the editions been distinguished by Italick characters, as if it were the proper name of some river; and so, I dare say, all the editors have from time to time understood it to be. But then this must be some river in Denmark; and there is none there so called; nor is there any near it in name, that I know of but *Yssel*, from which the province of Overyssel derives its title in the German Flanders. Besides, Hamlet is not proposing any impossibilities to Laertes, as the drinking up a river would be: but

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I 'll do 't.—Dost thou come here to whine? *I'll do't.*

he rather seems to mean,—Wilt thou resolve to do things the most shocking and distasteful to human nature; and, behold, I am as resolute. I am persuaded the poet wrote:

Wilt drink up Eisel? *eat a crocodile?*

i. e. Wilt thou swallow down large draughts of *vinegar?* The proposition, indeed, is not very grand: but the doing it might be as distasteful and unsavoury as eating the flesh of a *crocodile.* And now there is neither an impossibility, nor an anticlimax: and the lowness of the idea is in some measure removed by the uncommon term. *Theobald.*

Sir T. Hanmer has,

Wilt drink up Nile? *or eat a crocodile?*

Hamlet certainly meant (for he says he will rant) to dare Laertes to attempt any thing, however difficult or unnatural; and might safely promise to follow the example his antagonist was to set, in draining the channel of a river, or trying his teeth on an animal whose scales are supposed to be impenetrable. Had Shakspeare meant to make Hamlet say—*Wilt thou drink vinegar?* he probably would not have used the term *drink up;* which means, *totally to exhaust;* neither is that challenge very magnificent, which only provokes an adversary to hazard a fit of the heart-burn or the colick.

The commentator's *Yssell* would serve Hamlet's turn or mine. This river is twice mentioned by Stowe, p. 735: "It standeth a good distance from the river *Issell,* but hath a sconce on *Issell* of incredible strength."

Again, by Drayton, in the 24th Song of his *Polyolbion:*

"The one o'er *Isell's* banks the ancient Saxons taught;
"At *Over-Isell* rests, the other did apply: —."

And in *King Richard II,* a thought, in part the same, occurs, Act II, sc. ii:

"—— the task he undertakes
"Is numb'ring sands, and *drinking oceans dry.*"

But in an old Latin account of Denmark and the neighbouring provinces, I find the names of several rivers little differing from *Esil,* or *Eisell,* in spelling or pronunciation. Such are the *Essa,* the *Oesil,* and some others. The word, like many more, may indeed be irrecoverably corrupted; but, I must add, that few authors later than Chaucer or Skelton made use of *eysel* for *vinegar:* nor has Shakspeare employed it in any other of his plays. The poet might have written the *Weisel,* a considerable river which falls into the Baltick ocean, and could not be unknown to any prince of Denmark. *Steevens.*

Woul't is a contraction of *wouldest,* [wouldest thou] and perhaps ought rather to be written *woul'st.* The quarto, 1604, has *esil.* In the folio the word is spelt *esile. Eisil* or *eisel* is vinegar. The word is used by Chaucer, and Skelton, and Sir Thomas More, *Works,* p. 21, edit. 1557:

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To outface me with leaping in her grave?

" —— with sowre pocion
" If thou paine thy tast, remember therewithal
" How Christ for thee tasted *eisil* and gall."

The word is also found in Minsheu's *Dictionary*, 1617, and in Cole's *Latin Dictionary*, 1679.

Our poet, as Dr. Farmer has observed, has again employed the same word in his 111th Sonnet:

" —— like a willing patient I will drink
" Potions of *eysell* 'gainst my strong infection;
" No *bitterness* that I will bitter think,
" Nor double penance, to correct correction."

Mr. Steevens supposes, that a river was meant either the *Yssell*, or *Oesil*, or *Weisel*, a considerable river which falls into the Baltick ocean. The words, *drink up*, he considers as favourable to his notion. " Had Shakspeare (he observes) meant to make Hamlet say, *Wilt thou drink vinegar?* he probably would not have used the term *drink up*, which means, *totally to exhaust*. In *King Richard II*, Act II, sc. ii, (he adds) a thought in part the same occurs:

" —— the task he undertakes,
" Is numb'ring sands, and *drinking oceans dry*."

But I must remark, in that passage evidently *impossibilities* are pointed out. Hamlet is only talking of difficult or painful exertions. Every man can weep, fight, fast, tear himself, drink a potion of vinegar, and eat *a piece* of a dissected crocodile, however disagreeable; for I have no doubt that the poet uses the words *eat a crocodile*, for *eat* of *a crocodile*. We yet use the same phraseology in familiar language.

On the phrase *drink up* no stress can be laid, for our poet has employed the same expression in his 114th Sonnet, without any idea of *entirely exhausting*, and merely as synonymous to *drink*:

" Or whether doth my mind, being crown'd with you,
" *Drink up* the monarch's plague, this flattery?"

Again, in the same Sonnet:

" —— 'tis flattery in my seeing,
" And my great mind most kingly *drinks* it *up*."

Again, in *Timon of Athens*:

" And how his silence *drinks up* his applause."

In Shakspeare's time, as at present, to *drink up*, often meant no more than simply to drink. So, in Florio's *Italian Dictionary*, 1598: " *Sorbire*, to sip or *sup up* any drink." In like manner we sometimes say, " when you have *swallowed down* this potion," though we mean no more than—when you have swallowed this potion. *Malone.*

Mr. Malone's strictures are undoubtedly acute, and though not, in my own opinion, decisive, may still be just. Yet, as I cannot reconcile myself to the idea of a prince's challenging a nobleman to drink what Mrs. Quickly has called " a mess of vinegar," I have neither changed our former text, nor withdrawn my ori-

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Be buried quick with her, and so will I:
And, if thou prate of mountains, let them throw
Millions of acres on us; till our ground,
Singeing his pate against the burning zone,
Make Ossa like a wart! Nay, an thou 'lt mouth,
I 'll rant as well as thou.
Queen. This is mere madness:[4]
And thus a while the fit will work on him;
Anon, as patient as the female dove,
When that her golden couplets are disclos'd,[5]
His silence will sit drooping.
Ham. Hear you, sir;
What is the reason that you use me thus?
I lov'd you ever:[6] But it is no matter;
Let Hercules himself do what he may,
The cat will mew, and dog will have his day. [*Exit.*

ginal remarks on it, notwithstanding they are almost recapitulated in those of my opponent.—On the score of such redundancy, however, I both need and solicit the indulgence of the reader. *Steevens.*

[4] *This is mere madness:*] This speech in the first folio is given to the King. *Malone.*

[5] *When that her golden couplets are* disclos'd,] To *disclose* was anciently used for to *hatch*. So, in *The Booke of Huntynge, Hawkyng, Fyshing*, &c. bl. l. no date: "First they ben eges; and after they ben *disclosed*, haukes; and commonly goshaukes ben *disclosed* as sone as the choughes." To *exclude* is the technical term at present. During three days after the pigeon has *hatched* her *couplets*, (for she lays no more than *two* eggs) she never quits her nest, except for a few moments in quest of a little food for herself; as all her young require in that early state, is to be kept warm, an office which she never entrusts to the male. *Steevens.*

The young nestlings of the pigeon, when first disclosed, are callow, only covered with a yellow down: and for that reason stand in need of being cherished by the warmth of the hen, to protect them from the chilliness of the ambient air, for a considerable time after they are hatched. *Heath.*

The word *disclose* has already occurred in a sense nearly allied to *hatch*, in this play:

"And I do doubt, the hatch and the *disclose*
"Will be some danger." *Malone.*

[6] *What is the reason that you use me thus?*
I lov'd you ever:] So, in *A Midsummer-Night's Dream*, Helena says to her rival—

"—— do not be so bitter with me,
"*I evermore did love you*, Hermia." *Steevens.*

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King. I pray thee, good Horatio, wait upon him.—
[*Exit* Hor.
Strengthen your patience in our last night's speech;
[*To* Laer.
We 'll put the matter to the present push.—
Good Gertrude, set some watch over your son.—
This grave shall have a living monument:
An hour of quiet shortly[7] shall we see;
Till then, in patience our proceeding be. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

A Hall in the Castle.

Enter Hamlet *and* Horatio.

Ham. So much for this, sir: now shall you see the other;—
You do remember all the circumstance?
Hor. Remember it, my lord!
Ham. Sir, in my heart there was a kind of fighting,
That would not let me sleep;[8] methought, I lay

[7] —— *shortly* —] The first quarto erroneously reads—*thirty*. The second and third—*thereby*. The folio—*shortly*. *Steevens.*

[8] *Sir, in my heart there was a kind of fighting,*
That would not let me sleep; &c.] So, in *Troilus and Cressida:*
" Within my soul there doth commence a fight,
" Of this strange nature," &c.

The Hystorie of Hamblett, bl. l. furnished our author with the scheme of sending the Prince to England, and with most of the circumstances described in this scene:

[After the death of Polonius] " Fengon [the King in the present play] could not content himselfe, but still his mind gave him that the foole [Hamlet] would play him some trick of legerdemaine. And in that conceit, seeking to bee rid of him, determined to find the meanes to doe it by the aid of a stranger, making the king of England minister of his massacrous resolution; to whom he purposed to send him, and by letters desire him to put him to death.

" Now to beare him company, were assigned two of Fengon's faithful ministers, bearing letters ingraved in wood, that contained Hamlet's death, in such sort as he had advertised the king of England. But the subtil Danish prince, (being at sea) whilst his companions slept, having read the letters, and knowing his uncle's great treason, with the wicked and villainous mindes of the two courtiers that led him to the slaughter, raced out the letters that concerned his death, and instead thereof graved others, with commission to the king of England to hang

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Worse than the mutines in bilboes.[9] Rashly,

his two companions; and not content to turn the death they had devised against him, upon their own neckes, wrote further, that king Fengon willed him to give his daughter to Hamblet in marriage." *Hyst. of Hamblet*, signat. G 2.

From this narrative it appears that the faithful ministers of Fengon were not unacquainted with the import of the letters they bore. Shakspeare, who has followed the story pretty closely, probably meant to describe their representatives, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, as equally guilty; as confederating with the King to deprive Hamlet of his life. So that his procuring their execution, though certainly not absolutely necessary to his own safety, does not appear to have been a wanton and unprovoked cruelty, as Mr. Steevens has supposed in his very ingenious observations on the general character and conduct of the prince throughout the piece.

In the conclusion of his drama the poet has entirely deviated from the fabulous history, which in other places he has frequently followed.

After Hamblet's arrival in England, (for no sea-fight is mentioned) "the king, (says *The Hystory of Hamblet*) admiring the young prince,—gave him his daughter in marriage, according to the counterfeit letters by him devised; and the next day caused the two servants of Fengon to be executed, to satisfy, as he thought, the king's desire." *Hyst. of Hamb.* Ibid.

Hamlet, however returned to Denmark, without marrying the king of England's daughter, who, it should seem, had only been *betrothed* to him. When he arrived in his native country, he made the courtiers drunk, and having burnt them to death, by setting fire to the banqueting-room wherein they sat, he went into Fengon's chamber, and killed him, "giving him (says the relater) such a violent blowe upon the chine of the neck, that he cut his head clean from the shoulders." *Ibid.* signat. F 3.

He is afterwards said to have been crowned king of Denmark.

Malone.

I apprehend that a critick and a juryman are bound to form their opinions on what they see and hear in the cause before them, and not to be influenced by extraneous particulars unsupported by legal evidence in open court. I persist in observing, that from Shakspeare's drama no proofs of the guilt of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern can be collected. They may be convicted by the black letter history; but if the tragedy forbears to criminate, it has no right to sentence them. This is sufficient for the commentator's purpose. It is not his office to interpret the plays of Shakspeare according to the novels on which they are founded, novels which the poet sometimes followed, but as often materially deserted. Perhaps he never confined himself strictly to the plan of any one of his originals. His negligence of poetick justice is notorious; nor can we expect that he who was content to sacrifice the pious Ophelia, should have been more scrupulous

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And prais'd be rashness for it,—Let us know,
Our indiscretion sometime serves us well,
When[1] our deep plots do pall: and that should teach us,

about the worthless lives of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern. Therefore, I still assert that, in the tragedy before us, their deaths appear both wanton and unprovoked; and the critick, like Bayes, must have recourse to somewhat *long before the beginning of this play*, to justify the conduct of its hero. *Steevens.*

[9] —— mutines *in the bilboes.*] *Mutines*, the French word for seditious or disobedient fellows in the army or fleet. *Bilboes*, the *ship's prison. Johnson.*

To *mutine* was formerly used for to *mutiny*. See p. 186, n. 6. So *mutine*, for *mutiner*, or *mutineer*: "un homme *mutin*," Fr. a mutinous or seditious person. In *The Misfortunes of Arthur*, a tragedy, 1587, the adjective is used:

"Suppresseth *mutin* force, and practicke fraud." *Malone.*

The *bilboes* is a bar of iron with fetters annexed to it, by which mutinous or disorderly sailors were anciently linked together. The word is derived from *Bilboa*, a place in Spain where instruments of steel were fabricated in the utmost perfection. To understand Shakspeare's allusion completely, it should be known, that as these fetters connect the legs of the offenders very close together, their attempts to rest must be as fruitless as those of Hamlet, in whose mind *there was a kind of fighting that would not let him sleep*. Every motion of one must disturb his partner in confinement. The *bilboes* are still shown in the Tower of London, among the other spoils of the Spanish Armada. *Steevens.*

[1] ——— *rashly,*
And prais'd be rashness for it,—Let us know,
Our indiscretion sometimes serves us well,
When &c.] Hamlet delivering an account of his escape, begins with saying—That he *rashly*——and then is carried into a reflection upon the weakness of human wisdom. I rashly—— praised be rashness for it—*Let us* not think these events casual, but *let us know*, that is, *take notice and remember*, that we sometimes succeed by *indiscretion* when we *fail* by *deep plots*, and infer the perpetual superintendance and *agency* of the *Divinity*. The observation is just, and will be allowed by every human being, who shall reflect on the course of his own life. *Johnson.*

This passage, I think, should be thus distributed:

——————— *Rashly*
(*And prais'd be rashness, for it lets us know,*
Our indiscretion sometimes serves us well,
When our deep plots do fail; and that should teach us,
There 's a divinity that shapes our ends,
Rough-hew them how we will;—
Hor. *That is most certain.*)
Ham. *Up from my cabin,* &c.

So that *rashly* may be joined in construction with—*in the dark grop'd I to find out them. Tyrwhitt,*

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There 's a divinity that shapes our ends,
Rough-hew them how we will.[2]
Hor. That is most certain.
Ham. Up from my cabin,
My sea-gown scarf'd about me, in the dark
Grop'd I to find out them: had my desire;
Finger'd their packet; and, in fine, withdrew
To mine own room again: making so bold,
My fears forgetting manners, to unseal
Their grand commission; where I found, Horatio,
A royal knavery; an exact command,—
Larded with many several sorts of reasons,[3]
Importing Denmark's health, and England's too,
With, ho! such bugs and goblins in my life,[4]—
That, on the supervise, no leisure bated,
No, not to stay the grinding of the axe,
My head should be struck off.
Hor. Is 't possible?
Ham. Here 's the commission; read it at more leisure.

[2] *There's a divinity that* shapes our ends,
Rough-hew *them how we will.*] Dr. Farmer informs me, that these words are merely technical. A wool-man, butcher, and dealer in *skewers*, lately observed to him, that his nephew, (an idle lad) could only *assist* him in making them; "—— he could *rough-hew* them, but I was obliged to *shape their ends.*" To shape the ends of *wool-skewers*, i. e. to *point* them, requires a degree of skill; any one can *rough-hew* them. Whoever recollects the profession of Shakspeare's father, will admit that his son might be no stranger to such terms. I have frequently seen packages of wool pin'd up with *skewers*. *Steevens.*

[3] Larded *with many several sorts of* reasons,] I am afraid here is a very poor conceit, founded on an equivoque between *reasons* and *raisins*, which in Shakspeare's time were undoubtedly pronounced alike. *Sorts* of *raisins*, sugars, &c. is a common phraseology of shops.—We have the same quibble in another play. *Malone.*

I suspect no quibble or conceit in these words of Hamlet. In one of Ophelia's songs a similar phrase has already occurred: "*Larded* all with sweet flowers." To *lard* any thing with *raisins*, however, was a practice unknown to ancient cookery. *Steevens.*

[4] *With, ho! such bugs and goblins in my life,*] With *such causes of terror*, rising from my character and designs. *Johnson.*

A *bug* was no less a terrifick being than a goblin. So, in Spenser's *Fairy Queen*, Book II, c. iii:

"As ghastly *bug* their haire an end does reare,"

We call it at present a *bugbear*. *Steevens.*

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But wilt thou hear now how I did proceed?
Hor. Ay, 'beseech you.
Ham. Being thus benetted round with villanies,
Or I could make[5] a prologue to my brains,
They had begun the play;[6]—I sat me down;
Devis'd a new commission; wrote it fair:
I once did hold it, as our statists do,[7]
A baseness to write fair,[8] and labour'd much
How to forget that learning; but, sir, now
It did me yeoman's service:[9] Wilt thou know
The effect of what I wrote?
Hor. Ay, good my lord.

[5] Or *I could make* —] *Or* in old English signified *before*. *Malone.*

[6] *Being thus benetted round with villanies,*
Or I could make a prologue to my brains,
They had begun the play;] Hamlet is telling how luckily every thing fell out; he groped out their commission in the dark, without waking them; he found himself doomed to immediate destruction. Something was to be done for his preservation. An expedient occurred, not produced by the comparison of one method with another, or by a regular deduction of consequences, but before he *could make a prologue to his brains, they had begun the play.* Before he could summon his faculties, and propose to himself what should be done, a complete scheme of action presented itself to him. His mind operated before he had excited it. This appears to me to be the meaning. *Johnson.*

[7] —— *as our* statists *do,*] A *statist* is a *statesman.* So, in Shirley's *Humorous Courtier*, 1640:
" —— that he is wise, a *statist.*"
Again, in Ben Jonson's *Magnetick Lady:*
" Will screw you out a secret from a *statist.*" *Steevens.*
Most of the great men of Shakspeare's times, whose autographs have been preserved, wrote very bad hands; their secretaries very neat ones. *Blackstone.*

[8] *I once did hold it, as our statists do,*
A baseness to write fair,] " I have in my time, (says Montaigne) seene some, who by writing did earnestly get both their titles and living, to disavow their apprentissage, marre their pen, and affect the ignorance of *so vulgar a qualitie.*" Florio's translation, 1603, p. 125. *Ritson.*

[9] —— *yeoman's service:*] The meaning, I believe, is, *This yeomanly qualification was a most useful servant, or yeoman, to me;* i. e. did me eminent service. The ancient *yeomen* were famous for their military valour. " These were the good archers in times past, (says Sir Thomas Smith) and the stable troop of footmen that affraide all France." *Steevens.*

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Ham. An earnest conjuration from the king,—
As England was his faithful tributary;
As love between them like the palm might flourish;[1]
As peace should still her wheaten garland wear,
And stand a comma 'tween their amities;[2]
And many such like as's of great charge,[3]—
That, on the view and knowing of these contents,

[1] —— *like the palm might flourish;*] This comparison is scriptural: "The righteous shall flourish like a palm-tree." *Psalm* xcii. 11. *Steevens.*

[2] *As peace should still her wheaten garland wear,*
And stand a comma *'tween their amities;*] The expression of our author is, like many of his phrases, sufficiently constrained and affected, but it is not incapable of explanation. The *comma* is the note of *connection* and continuity of sentences; the *period* is the note of *abruption* and disjunction. Shakspeare had it perhaps in his mind to write,—That unless England complied with the mandate, *war should put a* period *to their amity;* he altered his mode of diction, and thought that, in an opposite sense, he might put, that *peace should stand a* comma *between their amities.* This is not an easy style; but is it not the style of Shakspeare? *Johnson.*

[3] —— as's *of great charge,*] *Asses* heavily *loaded.* A quibble is intended between *as* the conditional particle, and *ass* the beast of burthen. That *charg'd* anciently signified *loaded,* may be proved from the following passage in *The Widow's Tears,* by Chapman, 1612:

"Thou must be the *ass charg'd with crowns,* to make way."
Johnson.

Shakspeare has so many quibbles of his own to answer for, that there are those who think it hard he should be charged with others which perhaps he never thought of. *Steevens.*

Though the first and obvious meaning of these words certainly is, "*many similar* adjurations, or monitory injunctions, *of great weight and importance,*" yet Dr. Johnson's notion of a quibble being also in the poet's thoughts, is supported by two other passages of Shakspeare, in which *asses* are introduced as usually employed in the carriage of gold, a *charge* of no small weight:

"He shall but bear them, as the *ass bears gold,*
"To groan and sweat under the business." *Julius Cæsar,*

Again, in *Measure for Measure:*

"—— like an *ass,* whose back with *ingots* bows,
"Thou bear'st thy heavy riches but a journey,
"And death unloads thee."

In further support of his observation, it should be remembered, that the letter *s* in the particle *as* in the midland counties usually pronounced hard, as in the pronoun *us.* Dr. Johnson himself always pronounced the particle *as* hard, and so I have no doubt did Shakspeare. It is so pronounced in Warwickshire at this day. The first folio accordingly has—*assis. Malone.*

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Without debatement further, more, or less,
He should the bearers put to sudden death,
Not shriving-time allow'd.[4]
Hor. How was this seal'd?
Ham. Why, even in that was heaven ordinant;
I had my father's signet in my purse,
Which was the model of that Danish seal:[5]
Folded the writ up in form of the other;
Subscrib'd it; gave 't the impression; plac'd it safely,
The changeling never known:[6] Now, the next day
Was our sea-fight; and what to this was sequent
Thou know'st already.
Hor. So Guildenstern and Rosencrantz go to 't.
Ham. Why, man,[7] they did make love to this employment;
They are not near my conscience; their defeat
Does by their own insinuation grow:[8]
'Tis dangerous, when the baser nature comes
Between the pass and fell incensed points
Of mighty opposites.
Hor. Why, what a king is this!
Ham. Does it not, think thee,[9] stand me now upon?
He that hath kill'd my king, and whor'd my mother;
Popp'd in between the election and my hopes;
Thrown out his angle[1] for my proper life,

[4] *Not* shriving-*time allow'd.*] i. e. without time for confession of their sins: another proof of Hamlet's christian-like disposition. See *Romeo and Juliet*, Act IV, sc. ii. *Steevens.*

[5] —— *the* model *of that Danish seal:*] The *model* is in old language the *copy*. The signet was formed in imitation of the Danish seal. See Vol. VIII, p. 80, n. 8. *Malone.*

[6] *The* changeling *never known:*] A *changeling* is a *child* which the fairies are supposed to leave in the room of that which they steal. *Johnson.*

[7] *Why, man,* &c.] This line is omitted in the quartos. *Steevens.*

[8] —— *by their own* insinuation —] *Insinuation*, for corruptly obtruding themselves into his service. *Warburton.*
By their having insinuated or thrust themselves into the employment. *Malone.*

[9] —— think *thee,*] i. e. bethink thee. *Malone.*

[1] *Thrown out his* angle —] An *angle* in Shakspeare's time signified a fishing-rod. So, in Lyly's *Sappho and Phao*, 1591:
" *Phao.* But he may bless fishing, that caught such a one in the sea.

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And with such cozenage; is 't not perfect conscience,
To quit him[2] with this arm? and is 't not to be damn'd,
To let this canker of our nature come
In further evil?

Hor. It must be shortly known to him from England,
What is the issue of the business there.

Ham. It will be short: the interim is mine;
And a man's life no more than to say, one.
But I am very sorry, good Horatio,
That to Laertes I forgot myself;
For by the image of my cause, I see
The portraiture of his: I 'll count his favours:[3]
But, sure, the bravery of his grief did put me
Into a towering passion.

Hor. Peace; who comes here?

Enter OSRIC.

Osr. Your lordship is right welcome back to Denmark.

Ham. I humbly thank you, sir.—Dost know this water-fly?[4]

" *Venus.* It was not with an *angle,* my boy, but with a net."
Malone.

[2] *To quit him*—] To requite him; to pay him his due. *Johnson.*
This passage, as well as the three following speeches, is not in the quartos. *Steevens.*

[3] —— *I 'll* count *his favours:*] Thus the folio. Mr. Rowe first made the alteration, which is perhaps unnecessary. I 'll *count* his favours, may mean—*I will make account* of them, i. e. *reckon upon them, value them. Steevens.*
What favours has Hamlet received from Laertes, that he was to make account of?—I have no doubt but we should read:
—— *I 'll* court *his* favour. *M. Mason.*
Mr. Rowe for *count* very plausibly reads *court. Malone.*
Hamlet may refer to former civilities of Laertes, and weigh them against his late intemperance of behaviour; or may *count* on such kindness as he expected to receive in consequence of a meditated reconciliation.
It should be observed, however, that in ancient language to *count* and *recount* were synonymous. So, in the *Troy Book,* (Caxton's edit.) " I am comen hether unto yow for refuge, and to telle & *count* my sorowes." *Steevens.*

[4] —— *Dost know this* water-fly?] A *water-fly* skips up and down upon the surface of the water, without any apparent purpose or reason, and is thence the proper emblem of a busy trifler.
Johnson.

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Hor. No, my good lord.

Ham. Thy state is the more gracious; for 'tis a vice to know him: He hath much land, and fertile: let a beast be lord of beasts, and his crib shall stand at the king's mess: 'Tis a chough;[5] but, as I say, spacious in the possession of dirt.

Osr. Sweet lord, if your lordship were at leisure, I should impart a thing to you from his majesty.

Ham. I will receive it, sir, with all diligence of spirit: Your bonnet to his right use; 'tis for the head.

Osr. I thank your lordship, 'tis very hot.

Ham. No, believe me, 'tis very cold; the wind is northerly.

Osr. It is indifferent cold, my lord, indeed.

Ham. But yet, methinks, it is very sultry and hot;[6] or my complexion[7] ——

Osr. Exceedingly, my lord; it is very sultry,[8]—as 'twere,—I cannot tell how.—My lord, his majesty bade me signify to you, that he has laid a great wager on your head: Sir, this is the matter, —

Ham. I beseech you, remember[9] ——

[HAM. *moves him to put on his Hat.*

Water-fly is in *Troilus and Cressida* used as a term of reproach, for *contemptible from smallness of size:* "How (says Thersites) the poor world is pestered with such *water-flies; diminutives of nature.*" *Water-flies* are gnats. This insect in Chaucer denotes a thing of no value. *Canterbury Tales,* v. 17,203, Mr. Tyrwhitt's edition:

"Not worth to thee as in comparison
"*The mountance* [*value*] *of a gnat.*" *H. White.*

[5] —— *'Tis a chough;*] A kind of jackdaw. *Johnson.*
See Vol. VIII, p. 208, n. 2. *Steevens.*

[6] *But yet, methinks, it is very sultry* &c.] Hamlet is here playing over the same farce with Osric, which he had formerly done with Polonius. *Steevens.*

[7] —— or *my complexion* —] The folios read—*for* my complexion. *Steevens.*

[8] *Exceedingly, my lord; it is very sultry,*]
"—— igniculum brumæ si tempore poscas,
"Accipit endromidem; si dixeris æstuo, sudat." *Juv.*
Malone.

[9] *I beseech you,* remember —] "*Remember not your courtesy,*" I believe, Hamlet would have said, if he had not been interrupted. "Remember thy courtesy," he could not possibly have said, and therefore this abrupt sentence may serve to confirm an emen-

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Osr. Nay, good my lord; for my ease, in good faith.[1] Sir,[2] here is newly come to court, Laertes: believe me, an absolute gentleman, full of most excellent differences,[3] of very soft society, and great showing: Indeed, to speak feelingly[4] of him, he is the card or calendar of gentry,[5] for you shall find in him the continent of what part a gentleman would see.[6]

Ham. Sir, his definement suffers no perdition in you;[7]

dation which I proposed in *Love's Labour 's Lost*, Vol. IV, p. 105, n. 6, where Armado says,—"*I do beseech thee, remember* thy courtesy;—I beseech thee, apparel thy head." I have no doubt that Shakspeare there wrote, "—— remember *not* thy courtesy,"—and that the negative was omitted by the negligence of the compositor. *Malone.*

[1] *Nay, good my lord;* for my ease, *in good faith.*] This seems to have been the affected phrase of the time. Thus, in Marston's *Malcontent*, 1604: "I beseech you, sir, be covered.—No, in good faith *for my ease.*" And in other places. *Farmer.*

It appears to have been the common language of ceremony in our author's time. "Why do you stand *bareheaded?* (says one of the speakers in Florio's SECOND FRUTES, 1591,) you do yourself wrong. Pardon me, good sir, (replies his friend;) I do it *for my ease.*"

Again, in *A New Way to pay Old Debts*, by Massinger, 1633:

"—— Is 't *for your ease*
"You keep your hat off?" *Malone.*

[2] *Sir,* &c.] The folio omits this and the following fourteen speeches; and in their place substitutes only, "Sir, you are not ignorant of what excellence Laertes is at his weapon." *Steevens.*

[3] —— *full of most excellent differences,*] Full of *distinguishing* excellencies. *Johnson.*

[4] —— *speak* feelingly —] The first quarto reads—*sellingly.* So, in another of our author's plays:

"To things of sale a *seller's* praise belongs." *Steevens.*

[5] —— *the card or calendar of gentry,*] The general preceptor of elegance; the *card* by which a gentleman is to direct his course; the *calendar* by which he is to choose his time, that what he does may be both excellent and seasonable. *Johnson.*

[6] —— *for you shall find in him the continent of what part a gentleman would see.*] *You shall find him containing* and comprising every *quality* which a *gentleman* would desire to *contemplate* for imitation. I know not but it should be read, *You shall find him the continent.* *Johnson.*

[7] *Sir, his definement* &c.] This is designed as a specimen, and ridicule of the court-jargon amongst the *precieux* of that time. The sense in English is, "Sir, he suffers nothing in your account of him, though to enumerate his good qualities particularly

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—though, I know, to divide him inventorially, would dizzy the arithmetick of memory; and yet but raw neither,[8] in respect of his quick sail. But, in the verity of extolment, I take him to be a soul of great article;[9] and his infusion of such dearth[1] and rareness, as, to make true diction of him, his semblable is his mirrour; and, who else would trace him, his umbrage, nothing more.

Osr. Your lordship speaks most infallibly of him.

Ham. The concernancy, sir? why do we wrap the gentleman in our more rawer breath?

Osr. Sir?

Hor. Is 't not possible to understand in another tongue? You will do 't, sir, really.[2]

would be endless; yet when we had done our best, it would still come short of him. However, in strictness of truth, he is a great genius, and of a character so rarely to be met with, that to find any thing like him we must look into his mirrour, and his imitators will appear no more than his shadows." *Warburton.*

[8] —— *and yet but* raw *neither.*] We should read—*slow.* *Warburton.*

I believe *raw* to be the right word; it is a word of great latitude; *raw* signifies, *unripe, immature,* thence *unformed, imperfect, unskilful.* The best account of him would be *imperfect,* in respect of his quick sail. The phrase *quick sail* was, I suppose, a proverbial term for *activity of mind.* *Johnson.*

[9] —— *a soul of great* article;] This is obscure. I once thought it might have been, *a soul of great altitude;* but, I suppose, *a soul of great article,* means *a soul of large* comprehension, of many contents; the particulars of an inventory are called *articles.* *Johnson.*

[1] —— *of such* dearth —] *Dearth* is *dearness,* value, price. And his internal qualities of such value and rarity. *Johnson.*

[2] *Is 't not possible to understand in* another *tongue? You will do 't, sir, really.*] Of this interrogatory remark the sense is very obscure. The question may mean, *Might not all this be understood in plainer language.* But then, *you will do it, sir, really,* seems to have no use, for who could doubt but plain language would be intelligible? I would therefore read, *Is 't,* possible not to be understood in a *mother tongue? You will do it, sir, really.* *Johnson.*

Suppose we were to point the passage thus: "Is 't not possible to understand? In another tongue you will do it, sir, really."

The speech seems to be addressed to *Osric,* who is puzzled by Hamlet's imitation of his own affected language. *Steevens.*

Theobald has silently substituted *rarely* for *really.* I think Horatio's speech is addressed to Hamlet. *Another tongue* does not mean, as I conceive, *plainer language,* (as Dr. Johnson supposed) but "language so fantastical and affected as to have the appearance of a *foreign tongue:*" and in the following words Horatio, I

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Ham. What imports the nomination of this gentleman?

Osr. Of Laertes?

Hor. His purse is empty already; all his golden words are spent.

Ham. Of him, sir.

Osr. I know, you are not ignorant ——

Ham. I would, you did, sir; yet, in faith, if you did, it would not much approve me;[3]—Well, sir.

Osr. You are not ignorant of what excellence Laertes is ——

Ham. I dare not confess that, lest I should compare with him in excellence;[4] but, to know a man well, were to know himself.

Osr. I mean, sir, for his weapon; but in the imputation laid on him by them, in his meed[5] he 's unfellowed.

Ham. What 's his weapon?

Osr. Rapier and dagger.

Ham. That 's two of his weapons: but, well.

Osr. The king, sir, hath wagered with him six Barbary horses: against the which he has impawned,[6] as I take it, six French rapiers and poniards, with their as-

think, means to praise Hamlet for imitating this kind of babble so happily. I suspect, however, that the poet wrote—Is 't *possible not* to understand in *a mother tongue?*

Since this note was written, I have found the very same error in Bacon's *Advancement of Learning*, 4to. 1605, B. II, p. 60: "— the art of grammar, whereof the use in *another* tongue is small, in a foreine tongue more." The author in his table of Errata says, it should have been printed—in *mother* tongue. *Malone.*

[3] —— *if you did, it would not much* approve *me.*] If you knew I was not ignorant, your esteem would not much advance my reputation. To *approve*, is to *recommend to approbation. Johnson.*

[4] *I dare not confess that, lest I should compare with him* &c.] I dare not pretend to know him, lest I should pretend to an equality: no man can completely know another, but by knowing himself, which is the utmost extent of human wisdom. *Johnson.*

[5] —— *in his meed* —] In his excellence. *Johnson.*

See Vol. X, p. 401, n. 8. *Malone.*

[6] —— *impawned,*] Thus the quarto, 1604. The folio reads—*impon'd. Pignare* in Italian signifies both to *pawn*, and to lay a wager. *Malone.*

Perhaps it should be, *deponed.* So, Hudibras:

"I would upon this cause *depone*,
"As much as any I have known."

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signs, as girdle, hangers,[7] and so: Three of the carriages, in faith, are very dear to fancy, very responsive to the hilts, most delicate carriages, and of very liberal conceit.

Ham. **What call you the carriages?**

But perhaps *imponed* is pledged, *impawned*, so spelt to ridicule the affectation of uttering English words with French pronunciation. *Johnson.*

To *impone* is certainly right, and means to put down, to stake, from the verb *impono*. *Ritson.*

[7] ——— *hangers,*] Under this term were comprehended four graduated straps, &c. that hung down in a belt on each side of its receptacle for the sword. I write this, with a most gorgeous belt, at least as ancient as the time of James I, before me. It is of crimson velvet embroidered with gold, and had belonged to the Somerset family.

In Massinger's *Fatal Dowry*, Liladam (who, when arrested as a gentleman, avows himself to have been a tailor,) says:

" ——— This rich sword
" Grew suddenly out of a tailor's bodkin;
" These *hangers* from my vails and fees in hell:" &c.

i. e. the tailor's *hell;* the place into which shreds and remnants are thrown.

Again, in *The Birth of Merlin*, 1662:

" He has a fair sword, but his *hangers* are fallen."

Again, in *Rhodon and Iris*, 1631:

" ——— a rapier
" Hatch'd with gold, with hilt and *hangers* of the new fashion."

The same word occurs in the Eleventh *Iliad*, as translated by Chapman:

" The scaberd was of silver plate, with golden *hangers* graet."

Mr. Pope mistook the meaning of this term, conceiving it to signify—*short pendulous broad swords*. *Steevens.*

The word *hangers* has been misunderstood. That part of the girdle or belt by which the sword was suspended, was in our poet's time called *the hangers*. See Minsheu's *Dictionary*, 1617: " The *hangers* of a sword. G. Pendants d'espée, L. Subcingulum," &c. So, in an Inventory found among the papers of Hamlet Clarke, an attorney of a court of record in London, in the year 1611, and printed in *The Gentleman's Magazine*, Vol. LVIII, p. 111:

" *Item*, One *payre* of girdle and *hangers*, of silver purle, and cullored silke.

" *Item*, One payre of girdler and *hangers* upon white sattene."

The hangers ran into an oblique direction from the middle of the forepart of the girdle across the left thigh, and were attached to the girdle behind. *Malone.*

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Hor. I knew, you must be edified by the margent,[8] ere you had done.

Osr. The carriages, sir, are the hangers.

Ham. The phrase would be more german[9] to the matter, if we could carry a cannon by our sides; I would, it might be hangers till then. But, on: Six Barbary horses against six French swords, their assigns, and three liberal-conceited carriages; that 's the French bet against the Danish: Why is this impawned, as you call it?

Osr. The king, sir, hath laid,[1] that in a dozen passes between yourself and him, he shall not exceed you three hits; he hath laid, on twelve for nine; and it would come to immediate trial, if your lordship would vouchsafe the answer.

Ham. How, if I answer, no?

Osr. I mean, my lord, the opposition of your person in trial.

[8] —— *you must be edified by the* margent,] Dr. Warburton very properly observes, that in the old books the gloss or comment was usually printed on the margent of the leaf. So, in Decker's *Honest Whore*, Part II, 1630:

" ——— I read
" Strange comments in those *margins* of your looks."

Again, in *The Contention betwyxte Churchyeard and Camell*, &c. 1560:

" A solempne processe at a blussshe
" He quoted here and there,
" With matter in the *margent* set" &c.

This speech is omitted in the folio. *Steevens.*

[9] —— *more* german —] More *a-kin*. *Johnson.*

So, in *The Winter's Tale:* " Those that are *german* to him, though removed fifty times, shall come under the hangman."
Steevens.

[1] *The king, sir, hath laid,*] This wager I do not understand. In a dozen passes one must exceed the other more or less than three hits. Nor can I comprehend, how, in a dozen, there can be twelve to nine. The passage is of no importance; it is sufficient that there was a wager. The quarto has the passage as it stands. The folio—*He hath one twelve for mine. Johnson.*

As three or four complete pages would scarcely hold the remarks already printed, together with those which have lately been communicated to me in MS. on this very unimportant passage, I shall avoid both partiality and tediousness, by the omission of them all. I therefore leave the conditions of this wager to be adjusted by the members of Brookes's, or the Jockey-Club at Newmarket, who on such subjects may prove the most enlightened commentators, and most successfully bestir themselves in the cold unpoetick dabble of calculation. *Steevens.*

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Ham. Sir, I will walk here in the hall: If it please his majesty, it is the breathing time of day with me: let the foils be brought, the gentleman willing, and the king hold his purpose, I will win for him, if I can; if not, I will gain nothing but my shame, and the odd hits.

Osr. Shall I deliver you so?

Ham. To this effect, sir; after what flourish your nature will.

Osr. I commend my duty to your lordship. [*Exit.*

Ham. Yours, yours.—He does well, to commend it himself; there are no tongues else for 's turn.

Hor. This lapwing runs away with the shell on his head.[2]

Ham. He did comply with his dug, before he sucked it.[3] Thus has he (and many more of the same breed,[4]

[2] *This lapwing runs away with the shell on his head.*] I see no particular propriety in the image of the lapwing. Osric did not run till he had done his business. We may read—*This lapwing* run *away*.—That is, *this fellow was full of unimportant bustle from his birth.* *Johnson.*

The same image occurs in Ben Jonson's *Staple of News*:

" ——— and coachmen
" To mount their boxes reverently, and drive
" Like *lapwings with a shell upon their heads*,
" Thorough the streets."

And I have since met with it in several other plays. The meaning, I believe is—This is a *forward* fellow. So, in *The White Devil, or Vittoria Corombona*, 1612:

" *Forward* lapwing,
" He flies with the shell on 's head."

Again, in Greene's *Never too Late*, 1616: " Are you no sooner hatched, with the *lapwing*, but you will run away with *the shell on your head?*"

Again, in *Revenge for Honour*, by Chapman:

" Boldness enforces youth to hard atchievements
" Before their time; makes them run forth like *lapwings*
" From their warm nest, part of the *shell yet sticking*
" Unto their downy heads." *Steevens.*

I believe, Hamlet means to say that Osric is bustling and impetuous, and yet " but *raw* in respect of his quick sail." So, in *The Character of an Oxford Incendiary*, 1643: "This *lapwing* incendiary ran away *half-hatched* from Oxford, to raise a combustion in Scotland."

In Meres's *Wit's Treasury*, 1598, we have the same image expressed exactly in our poet's words: " As *the lapwing runneth away with the shell on her head*, as soon as she is hatched," &c. *Malone.*

[3] *He did* comply *with his dug*, &c.] Thus the folio. The quarto, 1604, reads—*A* [i. e. *he*] did, sir, with his dug, &c. For *comply*

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that, I know, the drossy age dotes on,) only got the tune of the time, and outward habit of encounter;[5] a kind of yesty collection, which carries them through and through the most fond and winnowed opinions;[6] and do but blow them to their trial, the bubbles are out.[7]

Dr. Warburton and the subsequent editors, read—*compliment.* The verb *to compliment* was not used, as I think, in the time of Shakspeare. *Malone.*

I doubt whether any alteration be necessary. Shakspeare seems to have used *comply* in the sense in which we use the verb *compliment.* See before, Act II, sc. ii: "— let me *comply* with you in this garb." *Tyrwhitt.*

Comply is right. So, in Fuller's *Historie of the Holy Warre,* p. 80: "Some weeks were spent in *complying,* entertainments, and visiting holy places; —." To *compliment* was, however, by no means, an unusual term in Shakspeare's time. *Reed.*

Again, *ibid.* p. 219: "But sure, so cunning a companion had long conversed with—and Princes, as appeareth by his *complying* carriage," &c. *Steevens.*

[4] —— *and* many *more of the same* breed,] The first folio has —*and* mine *more of the same* beavy. The second folio—*and* nine *more* &c. Perhaps the last is the true reading. *Steevens.*

There may be a propriety in *bevy,* as he has just called him a *lapwing. Tollet.*

"Many more of the same breed," is the reading of the quarto, 1604. *Malone.*

[5] —— outward *habit of encounter;*] Thus the folio. The quartos read—*out of an* habit of encounter. *Steevens.*

Outward habit of encounter, is exterior politeness of address; in allusion to Osric's last speech. *Henley.*

We should, I think, read—*an* outward habit, &c. *Malone.*

[6] —— *a kind of* yesty *collection, which carries them through and through the most* fond *and winnowed opinions;*] This passage in the quarto stands thus:—"They have got out of the habit of encounter, a kind of misty collection, which carries them through and through the most profane and trennowned opinions." If this printer preserved any traces of the original, our author wrote "the most *sane* and *renowned* opinions;" which is better than *fanned* and *winnowed.*

The meaning is, "these men have got the cant of the day, a superficial readiness of slight and cursory conversation, a kind of frothy collection of fashionable prattle, which yet carries them through the most select and approving judgments. This airy facility of talk sometimes imposes upon wise men."

Who has not seen this observation verified? *Johnson.*

The quarto, 1604, reads, "— dotes on; *only* got the tune of the time, and out of *an* habit," &c. and—not *misty,* but *histy;* the folio, rightly, *yesty:* the same quarto has not *trennowned,* but

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Enter a Lord.

Lord. My lord,[8] his majesty commended him to you by young Osric, who brings back to him, that you attend him in the hall: He sends to know, if your pleasure hold to play with Laertes, or that you will take longer time.

Ham. I am constant to my purposes, they follow the king's pleasure: if his fitness speaks, mine is ready; now, or whensoever, provided I be so able as now.

Lord. The king, and queen, and all are coming down.

Ham. In happy time.

trennowed (a corruption of *winnowed,*) for which (according to the usual process) the next quarto gave *trennowned. Fond* and *winnowed* is the reading of the folio. *Malone.*

Fond is evidently opposed to *winnowed. Fond,* in the language of Shakspeare's age, signified *foolish.* So, in *The Merchant of Venice:*

"Thou naughty jailer, why art thou so *fond,*" &c.

Winnowed is *sifted, examined.* The sense is then, that their conversation was yet successful enough to make them passable not only with the weak, but with those of sounder judgment. The same opposition in terms is visible in the reading which the quartos offer. *Profane* and *vulgar* is opposed to *trenowned* or *thrice renowned. Steevens.*

Fanned and *winnowed* seems right to me. Both words, *winnowed, fand** and drest, occur together in Markham's *English Husbandman,* p. 117. So do fan'*d* and winnow'*d,* fanned, and winnowed, in his *Husbandry,* p. 18, 76, and 77. So, Shakspeare mentions together the *fan* and *wind,* in *Troilus and Cressida,* Act V, sc. iii. *Tollet.*

On considering this passage, it always appeared to me that we ought to read, "the most *sound* and winnowed opinions:" and I have been confirmed in that conjecture by a passage I lately met with in Howel's *Letters,* where speaking of a man merely contemplative, he says: "Besides he may want judgment in the choice of his authors, and knows not how to turn his hand either in weighing or *winnowing the soundest opinions.*" Book III, Letter viii. *M. Mason.*

[7] —— *do but blow them* &c.] These men of show, without solidity, are like bubbles raised from soap and water, which dance, and glitter, and please the eye, but if you extend them, by blowing hard, separate into a mist; so if you oblige these specious talkers to extend their compass of conversation, they at once discover the tenuity of their intellects. *Johnson.*

[8] *My lord,* &c.] All that passes between *Hamlet* and this *Lord* is omitted in the folio. *Steevens.*

* So written without the apostrophe, and easily might in MS. be mistaken for fond.

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Lord. The queen desires you, to use some gentle entertainment[9] to Laertes, before you fall to play.

Ham. She well instructs me. [*Exit* Lord.

Hor. You will lose this wager, my lord.

Ham. I do not think so; since he went into France, I have been in continual practice; I shall win at the odds.[1] But thou would'st not think, how ill all 's here about my heart: but it is no matter.

Hor. Nay, good my lord, ——

Ham. It is but foolery; but it is such a kind of gain-giving,[2] as would, perhaps, trouble a woman.

Hor. If your mind dislike any thing, obey it:[3] I will forestal their repair hither, and say, you are not fit.

Ham. Not a whit, we defy augury; there is a special providence in the fall of a sparrow. If it be now, 'tis not to come; if it be not to come, it will be now; if it be not now, yet it will come: the readiness is all: Since no man, of aught he leaves, knows, what is 't to leave betimes?[4] Let be.

[9] —— *gentle entertainment* —] Mild and temperate conversation. *Johnson.*

[1] —— *I shall win at the* odds.] I shall succeed with the advantage that I am allowed. *Malone.*

[2] —— *a kind of* gain-giving,] *Gain-giving* is the same as *misgiving*. *Steevens.*

[3] *If your mind dislike any thing, obey it:*]

——— *Urgent præsagia mille*
Funeris, et nigræ præcedunt nubila mortis.

With these presages of future evils arising in the mind, the poet has fore-run many events which are to happen at the conclusions of his plays; and sometimes so particularly, that even the circumstances of calamity are minutely hinted at, as in the instance of Juliet, who tells her lover from the window, that he appears *like one dead in the bottom of a tomb.* The supposition that the genius of the mind gave an alarm before approaching dissolution, is a very ancient one, and perhaps can never be totally driven out: yet it must be allowed the merit of adding beauty to poetry, however injurious it may sometimes prove to the weak and superstitious. *Steevens.*

[4] *Since no man, of aught he leaves, knows, what is 't to leave betimes?*] The old quarto reads. *Since no man of aught he leaves, knows, what is 't to leave betimes? Let be.* This is the true reading. Here the premises conclude right, and the argument drawn out at length is to this effect: "It is true, that, by death, we lose all the goods of life; yet seeing this loss is no otherwise an evil than as we are sensible of it, and since death removes all sense

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Enter King, Queen, LAERTES, Lords, OSRIC, *and Attendants with Foils, &c.*

King. Come, Hamlet, come, and take this hand from me.

[*The* King *puts the Hand of* LAERTES *into that of* HAMLET.

Ham. Give me your pardon, sir:[5] I have done you wrong;
But pardon it, as you are a gentleman.
This presence knows, and you must needs have heard,
How I am punish'd with a sore distraction.
What I have done,
That might your nature, honour, and exception,
Roughly awake, I here proclaim was madness.
Was 't Hamlet wrong'd Laertes? Never, Hamlet:
If Hamlet from himself be ta'en away,
And, when he 's not himself, does wrong Laertes,
Then Hamlet does it not, Hamlet denies it.
Who does it then? His madness: If 't be so,
Hamlet is of the faction that is wrong'd;

of it, what matters it how soon we lose them? Therefore come what will, I am prepared." *Warburton.*

The reading of the quarto was right, but in some other copy the harshness of the tranposition was softened, and the passage stood thus:—*Since no man knows aught of what he leaves.* For *knows* was printed in the later copies *has*, by a slight blunder in such typographers.

I do not think Dr. Warburton's interpretation of the passage the best that it will admit. The meaning may be this,—Since *no man knows aught of* the state of which *he leaves*, since he cannot judge what other years may produce, why should he be afraid of *leaving* life betimes? Why should he dread an early death, of which he cannot tell whether it is an exclusion of happiness, or an interception of calamity. I despise the superstition of augury and omens, which has no ground in reason or piety; my comfort is, that I cannot fall but by the direction of Providence.

Sir T. Hanmer has—*Since no man* owes *aught*, a conjecture not very reprehensible. Since *no man can call any possession certain*, what is it to leave? *Johnson.*

Dr. Warburton has truly stated the reading of the first quarto, 1604. The folio reads,—*Since no man* has *ought* of what *he leaves, what is 't to leave betimes?*

In the late editions neither copy has been followed. *Malone.*

[5] *Give me your pardon, sir:*] I wish Hamlet had made some other defence; it is unsuitable to the character of a good or a brave man, to shelter himself in falsehood. *Johnson.*

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His madness is poor Hamlet's enemy.
Sir,[6] in this audience,
Let my disclaiming from a purpos'd evil
Free me so far in your most generous thoughts,
That I have shot my arrow o'er the house,
And hurt my brother.

Laer. I am satisfied in nature,[7]
Whose motive, in this case, should stir me most
To my revenge: but in my terms of honour,
I stand aloof; and will no reconcilement,
Till by some elder masters, of known honour,[8]
I have a voice and precedent of peace,
To keep my name ungor'd: But till that time,
I do receive your offer'd love like love,
And will not wrong it.

Ham. I embrace it freely;
And will this brother's wager frankly play.—
Give us the foils; come on.

Laer. Come, one for me.

Ham. I 'll be your foil, Laertes; in mine ignorance
Your skill shall, like a star i' the darkest night,

[6] *Sir*, &c.] This passage I have restored from the folio. *Steevens.*

[7] *I am satisfied in* nature, &c.] This was a piece of satire on fantastical honour. Though *nature* is satisfied, yet he will ask advice of older men of the sword, whether *artificial honour* ought to be contented with Hamlet's submission.

There is a passage somewhat similar in *The Maid's Tragedy*:

"*Evad.* Will you forgive me then?

"*Mel.* Stay, I must *ask mine honour* first." *Steevens.*

[8] *Till by some* elder masters, *of known honour*,] This is said in allusion to an English custom. I learn from an ancient MS. of which the reader will find a more particular account in a note to *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, Vol. III, p. 27, n. 9; that in Queen Elizabeth's time there were "four *ancient masters* of defence," in the city of London. They appear to have been the referees in many affairs of honour, and exacted tribute from all inferior practitioners of the art of fencing, &c. *Steevens.*

Our poet frequently alludes to English customs, and may have done so here, but I do not believe that gentlemen ever submitted points of honour to persons who exhibited themselves for money as prize-fighters on the publick stage; though they might appeal in certain cases to Raleigh, Essex, or Southampton, who from their high rank, their course of life, and established reputation, might with strict propriety be styled, "elder masters, *of known honour*." *Malone.*

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Stick fiery off indeed.[9]

Laer. You mock me, sir.

Ham. No, by this hand.

King. Give them the foils, young Osric.—Cousin Hamlet,
You know the wager?

Ham. Very well, my lord;
Your grace hath laid the odds o' the weaker side.[1]

King. I do not fear it; I have seen you both:—
But since he 's better'd, we have therefore odds.[2]

Laer. This is too heavy, let me see another.

Ham. This likes me well: These foils have all a length?
[*They prepare to play.*

Osr. Ay, my good lord.

King. Set me the stoups of wine[3] upon that table:—

[9] —— *like* a star i' the darkest night,
Stick fiery off indeed.] So, in Chapman's version of the twenty-second *Iliad*:
" —— a world of *stars* &c.—
" —— the *midnight that renders them most showne*,
" Then being their *foil*; —." *Steevens.*

[1] *Your grace hath laid* the odds *o' the weaker side.*] When the odds were on the side of Laertes, who was to hit Hamlet twelve times to nine, it was perhaps the author's slip. Sir T. Hanmer reads—

Your grace hath laid upon the weaker side. *Johnson.*

I see no reason for altering this passage. Hamlet considers the things *imponed* by the King, as of more value than those imponed by Laertes; and therefore says, that he had laid the odds on the weaker side." *M. Mason.*

Hamlet either means, that what the King had laid was more valuable than what Laertes staked; or that *the king hath made his bet, an advantage being given to the weaker party.* I believe the first is the true interpretation. In the next line but one the word *odds* certainly means *an advantage given to the party*, but here it may have a different sense. This is not an uncommon practice with our poet. *Malone.*

The King had wagered, on Hamlet, *six Barbary horses*, against a few *rapiers, poniards*, &c. that is, about *twenty* to one. These are the *odds* here meant. *Ritson.*

[2] *But since he 's better'd, we have therefore* odds.] These *odds* were *twelve* to *nine* in favour of Hamlet, by Laertes giving him *three.* *Ritson.*

[3] —— *the* stoups *of wine* —] A *stoop* is a kind of *flagon.* *Steevens.*

Containing somewhat more than two quarts. *Malone.*

Stoup is a common word in Scotland at this day, and denotes a pewter vessel, resembling our wine measure; but of no deter-

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If Hamlet give the first or second hit,
Or quit in answer of the third exchange,
Let all the battlements their ordnance fire;
The king shall drink to Hamlet's better breath;
And in the cup an union shall he throw,[4]
Richer than that which four successive kings
In Denmark's crown have worn; Give me the cups;

minate quantity, *that* being ascertained by an adjunct, as *gallon-stoup, pint-stoup, mutchkin-stoup,* &c. The vessel in which they fetch or keep water is also called the *water-stoup.* A *stoup of wine* is therefore equivalent to a pitcher of wine. *Ritson.*

[4] *And in the cup an* union *shall he throw,*] In some editions:
And in the cup an onyx *shall he throw.*
This is a various reading in several of the old copies; but *union* seems to me to be the true word. If I am not mistaken, neither the *onyx,* nor *sardonyx,* are jewels which ever found place in an imperial crown. An *union* is the finest sort of pearl, and has its place in all crowns, and coronets. Besides, let us consider what the King says on Hamlet's giving Laertes the first hit:
" Stay, give me drink. Hamlet, this *pearl* is thine;
" Here 's to thy health."
Therefore, if an *union* be a *pearl,* and an *onyx* a gem, or stone, quite differing in its nature from *pearls;* the King saying, that Hamlet has earned the *pearl,* I think, amounts to a demonstration that it was an *union* pearl, which he meant to throw into the cup. *Theobald.*

And in the cup an union *shall he throw,*] Thus the folio rightly. In the first quarto, by the carelessness of the printer, for *union* we have *unice,* which in the subsequent quarto copies was made *onyx.* An *union* is a very precious pearl. See Bullokar's *English Expositor,* 1616, and Florio's *Italian Dictionary,* 1598, in v. *Malone.*

So, in *Soliman and Perseda:*
" Ay, were it Cleopatra's *union.*"
The *union* is thus mentioned in P. Holland's translation of Pliny's *Natural History:* " And hereupon it is that our dainties and delicates here at Rome, &c. call them *unions,* as a man would say singular and by themselves alone."

To swallow a *pearl* in a draught seems to have been equally common to royal and mercantile prodigality. So, in the Second Part of *If You know not Me, You know Nobody,* 1606, Sir Thomas Gresham says:
" Here 16,000 pound at one clap goes.
" Instead of sugar, Gresham *drinks this pearle*
" Unto his queen and mistress."
It may be observed, however, that *pearls* were supposed to possess an exhilarating quality. Thus, *Rondelet,* Lib. I, de Testac, c. xv: " *Uniones* quæ à conchis &c. valde *cordiales* sunt." *Steevens.*

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And let the kettle to the trumpet speak,
The trumpet to the cannoneer without,
The cannons to the heavens, the heaven to earth,
Now the king drinks to Hamlet.—Come, begin;—
And you, the judges, bear a wary eye.

Ham. Come on, sir.

Laer. Come, my lord. [*They play.*

Ham. One.

Laer. No.

Ham. Judgment.

Oer. A hit, a very palpable hit.

Laer. Well,—again.

King. Stay, give me drink: Hamlet, this pearl is thine;[5]
Here 's to thy health.—Give him the cup.
[*Trumpets sound; and Cannon shot off within.*

Ham. I 'll play this bout first, set it by awhile.
Come.—Another hit; What say you? [*They play.*

Laer. A touch, a touch, I do confess.

King. Our son shall win.

Queen. He 's fat, and scant of breath.[6]—

[5] —— *this* pearl *is thine;*] Under pretence of throwing a *pearl* into the cup, the King may be supposed to drop some poisonous drug into the wine. Hamlet seems to suspect this, when he afterwards discovers the effects of the poison, and tauntingly asks him,—"Is the union here?" *Steevens.*

[6] Queen. *He 's* fat, *and scant of breath.*] It seems that *John Lowin*, who was the original *Falstaff*, was no less celebrated for his performance of *Henry VIII*, and *Hamlet*. See the *Historia Histrionica*, &c. If he was adapted, by the corpulence of his figure, to appear with propriety in the two former of these characters, Shakspeare might have put this observation into the mouth of her majesty, to apologize for the want of such elegance of person as an audience might expect to meet with in the representative of the youthful prince of Denmark, whom Ophelia speaks of as "the glass of fashion and the mould of form." This, however, is mere conjecture, as *Joseph Taylor* likewise acted *Hamlet* during the life of Shakspeare.

In *Ratsie's Ghost*, (Gamaliel) no date, about 1605, bl. l. 4°. the second part of his madde prankes &c.—He robs a company of players. "Sirra, saies he to the chiefest of them, thou hast a good presence on a stage—get thee to London, for if one man were dead, [Lowin, perhaps,] there would be none fitter than thyself to play his parts—I durst venture all the money in my purse on thy head to play *Hamlet* with him for a wager." He knights him afterwards, and bids him—"Rise up, Sir Simon

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Here, Hamlet, take my napkin, rub thy brows;
The queen carouses to thy fortune, Hamlet.[7]

Ham. Good madam, ——

King. Gertrude, do not drink.

Queen. I will, my lord;—I pray you, pardon me.

King. It is the poison'd cup; it is too late. [*Aside.*

Ham. I dare not drink yet, madam; by and by.

Queen. Come, let me wipe thy face.[8]

Laer. My lord, I 'll hit him now.

King. I do not think it.

Laer. And yet it is almost against my conscience. [*Aside.*

Ham. Come, for the third, Laertes: You do but dally;
I pray you, pass with your best violence:
I am afeard, you make a wanton of me.[9]

two shares & a halfe." I owe this quotation to one of Dr. Farmer's *memoranda*. *Steevens.*

The author of *Historia Histrionica*, and Downes the prompter, concur in saying, that Taylor was the performer of Hamlet. Roberts the player alone has asserted, (apparently without any authority) that this part was performed by Lowin. *Malone.*

[7] *The queen* carouses to thy fortune, *Hamlet,*] i. e. (in humbler language) drinks good luck to you. A similar phrase occurs in *David and Bethsabe*, 1599:

" With full *carouses to his fortune* past." *Steevens.*

[8] *Come, let me wipe thy face.*] These very words (the present repetition of which might have been spared) are addressed by Doll Tearsheet to Falstaff, when he was heated by his pursuit of Pistol. See Vol. IX, p. 74. *Steevens.*

[9] —— *you make a* wanton *of me.*] A *wanton* was a man feeble and effeminate. In *Cymbeline*, Imogen says, I am not—

" —— so citizen a *wanton*, as
" To seem to die, ere sick." *Johnson.*

Rather, you trifle with me as if you were playing with a child. So, in *Romeo and Juliet:*

" —— I would have thee gone,
" And yet no further than a *wanton's* bird,
" That lets it hop a little from her hand,
" And with a silk thread pulls it back again." *Ritson.*

A passage in *King John* shows that *wanton* here means *a man feeble and effeminate*, as Dr. Johnson has explained it:

" —— Shall a beardless *boy*,
" A cocker'd silken *wanton*, brave our fields,
" And flesh his spirit in a warlike soil," &c. *Malone.*

The following passage in the first scene of Lee's *Alexander the Great*, may furnish a sufficient comment on the words of Hamlet:

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Laer. Say you so? come on. [*They play.*
Osr. Nothing neither way.
Laer. Have at you now.
[LAER. *wounds* HAM.; *then, in scuffling, they change Rapiers, and* HAM. *wounds* LAER.
King. Part them, they are incens'd.
Ham. Nay, come again. [*The* Queen *falls.*
Osr. Look to the queen there, ho!
Hor. They bleed on both sides:—How is it, my lord?
Osr. How is 't, Laertes?
Laer. Why, as a woodcock to my own springe, Osric;
I am justly kill'd with mine own treachery.
Ham. How does the queen?
King. She swoons to see them bleed.
Queen. No, no, the drink, the drink,—O my dear Hamlet!—
The drink, the drink;—I am poison'd! [*Dies.*
Ham. O villainy!—Ho! let the door be lock'd:
Treachery! seek it out. [LAER. *falls.*
Laer. It is here, Hamlet: Hamlet, thou art slain;
No medicine in the world can do thee good,
In thee there is not half an hour's life;
The treacherous instrument is in thy hand,
Unbated, and envenom'd: the foul practice
Hath turn'd itself on me; lo, here I lie,
Never to rise again: Thy mother 's poison'd;
I can no more;—the king, the king 's to blame
Ham. The point
Envenom'd too!—Then, venom, to thy work.
[*Stabs the* King.
Osr. & Lords. Treason! treason!
King. O, yet defend me, friends, I am but hurt.
Ham. Here, thou incestuous, murd'rous, damned Dane,
Drink off this potion:—Is the union here?[1]
Follow my mother. [King *dies.*

" He *dallied* with my point, and when I thrust,
" He frown'd and smil'd, and foil'd me like a fencer."
Steevens.

[1] —— *Is the* union *here?*] In this place likewise the quarto reads, an *onyx*. *Steevens.*

—— *Is the* union *here?*] Thus the folio. In a former passage in the quarto, 1604, for *union* we had *unice*; here it has *onyx*.

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Laer. He is justly serv'd;
It is a poison temper'd by himself.—
Exchange forgiveness with me, noble Hamlet:
Mine and my father's death come not upon thee;
Nor thine on me! [*Dies.*

Ham. Heaven make thee free of it! I follow thee.
I am dead, Horatio:—Wretched queen, adieu!—
You that look pale and tremble at this chance,
That are but mutes or audience to this act,[2]
Had I but time, (as this fell sergeant, death,
Is strict in his arrest,)[3] O, I could tell you,—
But let it be:—Horatio, I am dead;
Thou liv'st; report me and my cause aright
To the unsatisfied.

Hor. Never believe it;
I am more an antique Roman than a Dane,
Here 's yet some liquor left.

Ham. As thou 'rt a man,—
Give me the cup; let go; by heaven, I 'll have it.—
O God!—Horatio,[4] what a wounded name,
Things standing thus unknown, shall live behind me![5]
If thou didst ever hold me in thy heart,
Absent thee from felicity awhile,
And in this harsh world draw thy breath in pain,
To tell my story.— [*March afar off, and Shot within.*
What warlike noise is this?

Osr. Young Fortinbras, with conquest come from Poland,
To the ambassadors of England gives

It should seem from this line, and Laertes's next speech, that Hamlet here forces the expiring King to drink some of the poisoned cup, and that he dies while it is at his lips. *Malone.*

[2] *That are but mutes and audience to this act,*] That are either *auditors* of this *catastrophe*, or at most only *mute performers*, that fill the stage without any part in the action. *Johnson.*

[3] —— (*as this fell* sergeant, *death,*
Is strict in his arrest,)] So, in our poet's 74th Sonnet:
" —— when that *fell arrest,*
" *Without all bail,* shall carry me away, —." *Malone.*
A *serjeant* is a bailiff, or sheriff's officer. *Ritson.*

[4] *O* God!—*Horatio,* &c.] Thus the quarto, 1604. Folio: O *good* Horatio. *Malone.*

[5] —— *shall* live *behind me?*] Thus the folio. The quartos read—shall *I leave* behind me. *Steevens.*

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This warlike volley.
Ham. O, I die, Horatio;
The potent poison quite o'er-crows my spirit;[5]
I cannot live to hear the news from England:
But I do prophecy, the election lights
On Fortinbras; he has my dying voice;
So tell him, with the occurrents,[7] more or less,
Which have solicited,[8]—The rest is silence. [*Dies.*

[6] *The potent poison quite* o'er-crows *my spirit;*] Thus the first quarto, and the first folio. Alluding, I suppose, to a victorious cock exulting over his conquered antagonist. The same word occurs in *Lingua*, &c. 1607:

" Shall I? th' embassadress of gods and men,
" That pull'd proud Phœbe from her brightsome sphere,
" And dark'd Apollo's countenance with a word,
" Be *over-crow'd*, and breathe without revenge?"

Again, in Hall's *Satires*, Lib. V, Sat. ii:

" Like the vain bubble of Iberian pride,
" That *over-croweth* all the world beside."

This phrase often occurs in the controversial pieces of Gabriel Harvey, 1593, &c. It is also found in Chapman's translation of the twenty-first Book of Homer's *Odyssey:*

" ——— and told his foe
" It was not fair, nor equal, t' *overcrow*
" The poorest guest —." *Steevens.*

This word, [*o'er-crows*] for which Mr. Pope and succeeding editors have substituted *over-grows*, is used by Holinshed in his *History of Ireland:* " These noblemen laboured with tooth and nayle to *over-crow*, and consequently to overthrow, one another."

Again, in the epistle prefixed to Nashe's *Apologie of Pierce Pennilesse*, 1593: " About two yeeres since a certayne demi-divine took upon him to set his foote to mine, and *over-crowe* me with comparative terms."

I find the reading which Mr. Pope and the subsequent editors adopted, (*o'ergrows*,) was taken from a late quarto of no authority, printed in 1637. *Malone.*

The accepted reading is the more quaint, the rejected one the more elegant of the two; at least Mr. Rowe has given the latter to his dying Amestris in *The Ambitious Stepmother:*

" The gloom *grows o'er* me." *Steevens.*

[7] ——— *the* occurrents,] i. e. incidents. The word is now disused. So, in *The Hog hath lost his Pearl*, 1614:

" Such strange *occurrents* of my fore-past life."

Again, in *The Barons' Wars*, by Drayton, Canto I:

" With each *occurrent*, right in his degree."

Again, in Chapman's version of the twenty-fourth *Iliad:*

" Of good *occurrents* and none ill am I ambassadresse."
Steevens.

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Hor. Now cracks a noble heart:—Good night, sweet prince; [8]
And flights of angels sing thee to thy rest! [9]

[8] *Which have* solicited.] *Solicited*, for brought on the event. *Warburton.*

Warburton says, that *solicited* means *brought on the event*; but that is a meaning the word cannot import. That have *solicited*, means that have *excited*; but the sentence is left imperfect. *M. Mason.*

What Hamlet would have said, the poet has not given us any ground for conjecturing. The words seem to mean no more than —*which have incited me to*—. *Malone.*

[9] *Now cracks a noble heart:—Good night, sweet prince;*
And flights of angels sing thee to thy rest!] So, in *Pericles, Prince of Tyre*, 1609:

"If thou liv'st, Pericles, thou hast a *heart*,
"That even *cracks* for woe."

The concluding words of the unfortunate Lord Essex's prayer on the scaffold were these: "— and when my life and body shall part, send *thy blessed angels, which may receive my soule, and convey it to the joys of heaven.*"

Hamlet had certainly been exhibited before the execution of that amiable nobleman; but the words here given to Horatio might have been one of the many additions made to this play. As no copy of an earlier date than 1604 has yet been discovered, whether Lord Essex's last words were in our author's thoughts, cannot be now ascertained. *Malone.*

And flights of angels sing thee to thy rest!] Rather from Marston's *Insatiate Countess*, 1603:

"An host of angels be thy convey hence!" *Steevens.*

Let us review for a moment the behaviour of Hamlet, on the strength of which Horatio founds this eulogy, and recommends him to the patronage of angels.

Hamlet, at the command of his father's ghost, undertakes with seeming alacrity to revenge the murder; and declares he will banish all other thoughts from his mind. He makes, however, but one effort to keep his word, and that is, when he mistakes Polonius for the King. On another occasion, he defers his purpose till he can find an opportunity of taking his uncle when he is least prepared for death, that he may insure damnation to his soul. Though he assassinated Polonius by accident, yet he deliberately procures the execution of his school-fellows, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, who appear not, from any circumstances in this play, to have been acquainted with the treacherous purposes of the mandate they were employed to carry. To embitter their fate, and hazard their punishment beyond the grave, he denies them even the few moments necessary for a brief confession of their sins. Their end (as he declares in a subsequent conversation with Horatio) gives him no concern, for they obtruded

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Why does the drum come hither? [*March within.*

themselves into the service, and he thought he had a right to destroy them. From his brutal conduct towards Ophelia, he is not less accountable for her distraction and death. He interrupts the funeral designed in honour of this lady, at which both the King and Queen were present; and, by such an outrage to decency, renders it still more necessary for the usurper to lay a second stratagem for his life, though the first had proved abortive. He insults the brother of the dead, and boasts of an affection for his sister, which, before, he had denied to her face; and yet at this very time must be considered as desirous of supporting the character of a madman, so that the openness of his confession is not to be imputed to him as a virtue. He apologizes to Horatio afterwards for the absurdity of this behaviour, to which, he says, he was provoked by that nobleness of fraternal grief, which, indeed, he ought rather to have applauded than condemned. Dr. Johnson has observed, that to bring about a reconciliation with Laertes, he has availed himself of a dishonest fallacy; and to conclude, it is obvious to the most careless spectator or reader, that he kills the King at last to revenge himself, and not his father.

Hamlet cannot be said to have pursued his ends by very warrantable means; and if the poet, when he sacrificed him at last, meant to have enforced such a moral, it is not the worst that can be deduced from the play; for, as *Maximus*, in Beaumont and Fletcher's *Valentinian*, says—

" Although his justice were as white as truth,
" His way was crooked to it; that condemns him."

The late Dr. Akenside once observed to me, that the conduct of Hamlet was every way unnatural and indefensible, unless he were to be regarded as a young man whose intellects were in some degree impaired by his own misfortunes; by the death of his father, the loss of expected sovereignty, and a sense of shame resulting from the hasty and incestuous marriage of his mother.

I have dwelt the longer on this subject, because Hamlet seems to have been hitherto regarded as a hero not undeserving the pity of the audience; and because no writer on Shakspeare has taken the pains to point out the immoral tendency of his character.

Steevens.

Mr. Ritson controverts the justice of Mr. Steevens's strictures on the character of Hamlet, which he undertakes to defend. The arguments he makes use of for this purpose are too long to be here inserted, and therefore I shall content myself with referring to them. See REMARKS, p. 217 to 224. *Reed*

Some of the charges here brought against Hamlet appear to me questionable at least, if not unfounded. I have already observed that in the novel on which this play is constructed, the ministers who by the king's order accompanied the young prince to England, and carried with them a packet in which his death was concerted, were apprized of its contents: and therefore we

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Enter FORTINBRAS, *the* English Ambassadors, *and Others.*

Fort. Where is this sight?

may *presume* that Shakspeare meant to describe their representatives, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, as equally criminal; as combining with the King to deprive Hamlet of his life. His procuring their execution therefore does not with certainty appear to have been unprovoked cruelty, and *might* have been considered by him as necessary to his *future safety*; knowing, as he must have known, that they had devoted themselves to the service of the King in whatever he should command. The principle on which he acted, is ascertained by the following lines, from which also it may be inferred that the poet meant to represent Hamlet's school-fellows as privy to the plot against his life:

" There 's letters seal'd: and my two school-fellows—
" Whom I will trust as I will adders fang'd,
" They bear the mandate; they must sweep my way,
" And marshal me to knavery: Let it work,
" For 'tis the sport, to have the engineer
" Hoist with his own petar; and it shall go hard,
" But I will delve one yard below *their* mines,
" *And blow them to the moon.*"

Another charge is, that "*he comes** *to disturb the funeral of Ophelia:*" but the fact is otherwise represented in the first scene of the fifth Act: for when the funeral procession appears, (which he does not seek, but finds,) he exclaims—

" The queen, the courtiers: *who is this they follow,*
" And with such maimed rites?"

nor does he know it to be the funeral of Ophelia, till Laertes mentions that the dead body was that of his sister.

I do not perceive that he is accountable for the madness of Ophelia. He did not mean to kill her father when concealed behind the arras, but the King; and still less did he intend to deprive her of her reason and her life: her subsequent distraction therefore can no otherwise be laid to his charge, than as an unforeseen consequence from his too ardently pursuing the object recommended to him by his father.

He appears to have been induced to leap into Ophelia's grave, not with a design to insult Laertes, but from his love to her, (which then he had no reason to conceal,) and from the *bravery of her brother's grief*, which excited him (not to condemn that brother, as has been stated, but) to *vie* with him in the expression of affection and sorrow:

" Why, I will fight him upon this theme,
" Until my eyelids will no longer wag.—
" I lov'd Ophelia; forty thousand brothers
" Could not with all their quantity of love
" Make up my sum."

When Hamlet says, "the bravery of his grief did put me into

* — *he comes* —] The words stood thus in edit. 1778, &c. *Steevens.*

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Hor. What is it, you would see?
If aught of woe, or wonder, cease your search.
Fort. This quarry cries on havock![1]—O proud death!
What feast is toward in thine eternal cell,[2]
That thou so many princes, at a shot,
So bloodily hast struck?
1 *Amb.* The sight is dismal;
And our affairs from England come too late:
The ears are senseless, that should give us hearing,
To tell him, his commandment is fulfill'd,
That Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are dead:
Where should we have our thanks?
Hor. Not from his mouth,[3]
Had it the ability of life to thank you;
He never gave commandment for their death.
But since, so jump upon this bloody question,
You from the Polack wars, and you from England,
Are here arriv'd; give order, that these bodies
High on a stage be placed to the view;[4]

a *towering passion*," I think, he means, into a lofty expression (not of *resentment*, but) of *sorrow*. So, in *King John*, Vol. VII, p. 330, n. 3:

" She is *sad* and *passionate* at your highness' tent."

Again, more appositely in the play before us:

" The instant burst of clamour that she made,
" (Unless things mortal move them not at all)
" Would have made milch the burning eyes of heaven,
" And *passion* in the gods."

I may also add, that he neither assaulted, nor insulted Laertes, till that nobleman had cursed him, and seized him by the throat. *Malone.*

[1] *This quarry* cries on *havock!*] Sir T. Hanmer reads:

——— *cries* out, *havock!*

To *cry on*, was to *exclaim against*. I suppose, when unfair sportsmen destroyed more *quarry* or *game* than was reasonable, the censure was to cry, *Havock*. *Johnson.*

We have the same phraseology in *Othello*, Act V, sc. i:

" ——Whose noise is this, that *cries on* murder?"

See the note there. *Malone.*

[2] *What* feast *is toward in thine eternal cell,*] Shakspeare has already employed this allusion to the *Choæ*, or *feasts of the dead*, which were anciently celebrated at Athens, and are mentioned by Plutarch in *The Life of Antonius*. Our author likewise makes *Talbot* say to his son in *The First Part of King Henry VI:*

" Now art thou come unto a *feast of death*." *Steevens.*

[3] ——— *his mouth,*] i. e. the king's. *Steevens.*

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And let me speak, to the yet unknowing world,
How these things came about: So shall you hear
Of carnal, bloody, and unnatural acts;[5]
Of accidental judgments, casual slaughters;
Of deaths put on[6] by cunning, and forc'd cause;[7]
And, in this upshot, purposes mistook
Fall'n on the inventors' heads: all this can I
Truly deliver.

Fort. Let us haste to hear it,
And call the noblest to the audience.
For me, with sorrow I embrace my fortune;
I have some rights of memory in this kingdom,[8]
Which now to claim my vantage doth invite me.

Hor. Of that I shall have also cause to speak,
And from his mouth whose voice will draw on more:[9]

[4] —— *give order, that these* bodies
High on a stage *be placed to the view;*] This idea was apparently taken from Arthur Brooke's *Tragicall Hystory of Romeus and Juliet*, 1562:

"The prince did straight ordaine, the *corses* that wer founde,
"Should be set forth *upon a stage hye raysed* from the grounde," &c. *Steevens.*

[5] *Of* carnal, *bloody, and unnatural acts;*] *Carnal* is a word used by Shakspeare as an adjective to *carnage*. *Ritson.*

Of sanguinary and unnatural acts, to which the perpetrator was instigated by concupiscence, or, to use our poet's own words, by "*carnal* stings." The speaker alludes to the murder of old Hamlet by his brother, previous to his incestuous union with Gertrude. A *Remarker* asks, "was the relationship between the usurper and the deceased king a secret confined to Horatio?"—No, but the *murder* of Hamlet by Claudius was a secret which the young prince had imparted to Horatio, and had imparted to him alone; and to this it is he principally, though covertly, alludes.—*Carnal* is the reading of the only authentick copies, the quarto, 1604, and the folio, 1623. The modern editors, following a quarto of no authority, for *carnal*, read *cruel*. *Malone.*

The edition immediately preceding that of Mr. Malone, reads —*carnal*, and not *cruel*, as here asserted. *Reed.*

[6] *Of deaths* put on —] i. e. instigated, produced. See Vol. XIII, p. 84, n. 1. *Malone.*

[7] —— *and* forced *cause;*] Thus the folio. The quartos read—and *for no* cause. *Steevens.*

[8] —— *some rights* of memory *in this kingdom,*] Some rights, which are remembered in this kingdom. *Malone.*

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But let this scene be presently perform'd,
Even while men's minds are wild; lest more mischance,
On plots, and errors, happen.

Fort. Let four captains
Bear Hamlet, like a soldier, to the stage;
For he was likely, had he been put on,
To have prov'd most royally: and, for his passage,
The soldiers' musick, and the rites of war,
Speak loudly for him.—
Take up the bodies:—Such a sight as this
Becomes the field, but here shows much amiss.
Go, bid the soldiers shoot. [*A dead March.*

[*Exeunt, bearing off the dead Bodies; after which, a Peal of Ordnance is shot off.*[1]

[9] *And from his mouth whose voice will draw* on *more:*] *No* is the reading of the old quartos, but certainly a mistaken one. We say, *a man will no more draw breath;* but that a man's *voice will draw no more*, is, I believe, an expression without any authority. I choose to espouse the reading of the elder folio:

And from his mouth whose voice will draw on *more.*

And this is the poet's meaning. Hamlet, just before his death, had said:

"But I do prophecy, the election lights
"On Fortinbras: he has my dying *voice;*
"So tell *him,*" &c.

Accordingly, Horatio here delivers that message; and very justly infers, that Hamlet's *voice* will be seconded by others, and procure them in favour of Fortinbras's succession. *Theobald.*

[1] If the dramas of Shakspeare were to be characterised, each by the particular excellence which distinguishes it from the rest, we must allow to the tragedy of Hamlet the praise of variety. The incidents are so numerous, that the argument of the play would make a long tale. The scenes are interchangeably diversified with merriment and solemnity; with merriment that includes judicious and instructive observations; and solemnity not strained by poetical violence above the natural sentiments of man. New characters appear from time to time in continual succession, exhibiting various forms of life and particular modes of conversation. The pretended madness of Hamlet causes much mirth, the mournful distraction of Ophelia fills the heart with tenderness, and every personage produces the effect intended, from the apparition that in the first Act chills the blood with horror, to the fop in the last, that exposes affectation to just contempt.

The conduct is perhaps not wholly secure against objections. The action is indeed for the most part in continual progression, but there are some scenes which neither forward nor retard it. Of the feigned madness of Hamlet there appears no adequate

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cause, for he does nothing which he might not have done with the reputation of sanity. He plays the madman most, when he treats Ophelia with so much rudeness, which seems to be useless and wanton cruelty.

Hamlet is, through the whole piece, rather an instrument than an agent. After he has, by the stratagem of the play, convicted the King, he makes no attempt to punish him; and his death is at last effected by an incident which Hamlet had no part in producing.

The catastrophe is not very happily produced; the exchange of weapons is rather an expedient of necessity, than a stroke of art. A scheme might easily be formed to kill Hamlet with the dagger, and Laertes with the bowl.

The poet is accused of having shown little regard to poetical justice, and may be charged with equal neglect of poetical probability. The apparition left the regions of the dead to little purpose; the revenge which he demands is not obtained, but by the death of him that was required to take it; and the gratification, which would arise from the destruction of an usurper and a murderer, is abated by the untimely death of Ophelia, the young, the beautiful, the harmless, and the pious. *Johnson.*

The levity of behaviour which Hamlet assumes immediately after the disappearance of the Ghost in the first Act [sc. v,] has been objected to; but the writer of some sensible Remarks on this tragedy, published in 1736, justly observes, that the poet's object there was, that Marcellus "might not imagine that the Ghost had revealed to Hamlet some matter of great consequence to him, and that he might not therefore be suspected of any deep design."

"I have heard (adds the same writer) many persons wonder, why the poet should bring in this Ghost in complete armour.—I think these reasons may be given for it. We are to consider, that he could introduce him in these dresses only; in his regal dress, in a habit of interment, in a common habit, or in some fantastick one of his own invention. Now let us examine, which was most likely to affect the spectators with passions proper on the occasion.

"The regal habit has nothing uncommon in it, nor surprising, nor could it give rise to any fine images. The habit of interment was something too horrible; for terror, not horror, is to be raised in the spectators. The common habit (or *habit de ville*, as the French call it,) was by no means proper for the occasion. It remains then that the poet should choose some habit from his own brain: but this certainly could not be proper, because invention in such a case would be so much in danger of falling into the grotesque, that it was not to be hazarded.

"Now as to the armour, it was very suitable to a king who is described as a great warrior, and is very particular; and consequently affects the spectators without being fantastick.—

"The king spurs on his son to revenge his foul and unnatural murder, from these two considerations chiefly; that he was sent

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into the other world without having had time to repent of his sins, and without the necessary sacraments, according to the church of Rome, and that consequently his soul was to suffer, if not eternal damnation, at least a long course of pennance in purgatory; which aggravates the circumstances of his brother's barbarity; and secondly, that Denmark might not be the scene of usurpation and incest, and the throne thus polluted and profaned. For these reasons he prompts the young prince to revenge; else it would have been more becoming the character of such a prince as Hamlet's father is represented to have been, and more suitable to his present condition, to have left his brother to the divine punishment, and to a possibility of repentance for his base crime, which, by cutting him off, he must be deprived of.

"To conform to the ground-work of his plot, Shakspeare makes the young prince feign himself mad. I cannot but think this to be injudicious; for so far from securing himself from any violence which he feared from the usurper, it seems to have been the most likely way of getting himself confined, and consequently debarred from an opportunity of revenging his father's death, which now seemed to be his only aim; and accordingly it was the occasion of his being sent away to England; which design, had it taken effect upon his life, he never could have revenged his father's murder. To speak truth, our poet by keeping too close to the ground-work of his plot, has fallen into an absurdity; for there appears no reason at all in nature, why the young prince did not put the usurper to death as soon as possible, especially as Hamlet is represented as a youth so brave, and so careless of his own life.

"The case indeed is this, Had Hamlet gone naturally to work, as we could suppose such a prince to do in parallel circumstances, there would have been an end of our play. The poet, therefore, was obliged to delay his hero's revenge: but then he should have contrived some good reason for it.

"His beginning his scenes of Hamlet's madness by his behaviour to Ophelia, was judicious, because by this means he might be thought to be mad for her, not that his brain was disturbed about state affairs, which would have been dangerous.

"It does not appear whether Ophelia's madness was chiefly for her father's death, or for the loss of Hamlet. It is not often that young women run mad for the loss of their fathers. It is more natural to suppose that, like *Chimene*, in the *Cid*, her great sorrow proceeded from her father's being killed by the man she loved, and thereby making it indecent for her ever to marry him.

"Laertes's character is a very odd one; it is not easy to say whether it is good or bad: but his consenting to the villainous contrivance of the usurper's to murder Hamlet, makes him much more a bad man than a good one.—It is a very nice conduct in the poet to make the usurper build his scheme upon the generous unsuspicious temper of the person he intends to murder, and thus to raise the prince's character by the confession of his enemy; to make the villain ten times more odious from his own

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mouth. The contrivance of the foil 'unbated,' (i. e. without a button) is methinks too gross a deceit to go down even with a man of the most unsuspicious nature.

"Laertes's death and the Queen's are truly poetical justice, and very naturally brought about, although I do not conceive it so easy to change rapiers in a scuffle without knowing it at the time. The death of the Queen is particularly according to the strictest rules of poetical justice; for she loses her life by the villainy of the very person, who had been the cause of all her crimes.

"Since the poet deferred so long the usurper's death, we must own that he has very naturally effected it, and still added fresh crimes to those the murderer had already committed.

"Upon Laertes's repentance for contriving the death of Hamlet, one cannot but feel some sentiments of pity for him; but who can see or read the death of the young prince without melting into tears and compassion? Horatio's earnest desire to die with the prince, thus not to survive his friend, gives a stronger idea of his friendship for Hamlet in the few lines on that occasion, than many actions or expressions could possibly have done. And Hamlet's begging him *to draw his breath in this harsh world* a little longer, to clear his reputation, and manifest his innocence, is very suitable to his virtuous character, and the honest regard that all men should have not to be misrepresented to posterity; that they may not set a bad example, when in reality they have set a good one: which is the only motive that can, in reason, recommend the love of fame and glory.

"Horatio's desire of having the bodies carried to a stage, &c. is very well imagined, and was the best way of satisfying the request of his deceased friend: and he acts in this, and in all points, suitably to the manly honest character, under which he is drawn throughout the piece. Besides, it gives a sort of content to the audience, that though their favourite (which must be Hamlet) did not escape with life, yet the greatest amends will be made him, which can be in this world, viz. justice done to his memory.

"Fortinbras comes in very naturally at the close of the play, and lays a very just claim to the throne of Denmark, as he had the dying voice of the prince. He in a few words gives a noble character of Hamlet, and serves to carry off the deceased hero from the stage with the honours due to his birth and merit."

Malone.

ACT II.....SCENE II.

The rugged Pyrrhus, he, &c.] The two greatest poets of this and the last age, Mr. Dryden, in the preface to *Troilus and Cressida*, and Mr. Pope, in his note on this place, have concurred in thinking, that Shakspeare produced this long passage with design to ridicule and expose the bombast of the play from whence it was taken; and that Hamlet's commendation of it is purely ironical.

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This is become the general opinion. I think just otherwise; and that it was given with commendation to upbraid the false taste of the audience of that time, which would not suffer them to do justice to the simplicity and sublime of this production. And I reason, first, from the character Hamlet gives of the play, from whence the passage is taken. Secondly, from the passage itself. And thirdly, from the effect it had on the audience.

Let us consider the character Hamlet gives of it. *The play I remember, pleased not the million; 'twas caviare to the general: but it was (as I received it, and others, whose judgement in such matters cried in the top of mine) an excellent play, well digested in the scenes, set down with as much modesty as cunning. I remember one said, there was no salt in the lines to make the matter savoury; nor no matter in the phrase that might indite the author of affection; but called it an honest method.* They who suppose the passage given to be ridiculed, must needs suppose this character to be purely ironical. But if so, it is the strangest irony that ever was written. *It pleased not the multitude.* This we must conclude to be true, however ironical the rest be. Now the reason given of the designed ridicule is the supposed bombast. But those were the very plays, which at that time we know took with the multitude. And Fletcher wrote a kind of *Rehearsal* purposely to expose them. But say it is bombast, and that therefore it took not with the multitude. Hamlet presently tells us what it was that displeased them. *There was no salt in the lines to make the matter savoury; nor no matter in the phrase that might indite the author of affection; but called it an honest method.* Now whether a person speaks ironically or no, when he quotes others, yet common sense requires he should quote what they say. Now it could not be, if this play displeased because of the bombast, that those whom it displeased should give this reason for their dislike. The same inconsistencies and absurdities abound in every other part of Hamlet's speech, supposing it to be ironical; but take him as speaking his sentiments, the whole is of a piece; and to this purpose. The play, I remember, pleased not the multitude, and the reason was, its being wrote on the rules of the ancient drama; to which they were entire strangers. But, in my opinion, and in the opinion of those for whose judgment I have the highest esteem, it was an excellent play, *well digested in the scenes*, i. e. where the three unities were well preserved. *Set down with as much modesty as cunning*, i. e. where not only the art of composition, but the simplicity of nature, was carefully attended to. The characters were a faithful picture of life and manners, in which nothing was overcharged into farce. But these qualities, which gained my esteem, lost the publick's. For *I remember, one said, There was no salt in the lines to make the matter savoury*, i. e. there was not, according to the mode of that time, a fool or clown, to joke, quibble, and talk freely. *Nor no matter in the phrase that might indite the author of affection*, i. e. nor none of those passionate, pathetick love scenes, so essential to modern tragedy. *But he called it an honest method*, i. e. he owned, however *tasteless* this method of writing, on the ancient plan, was to our

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times, yet it was chaste and pure; the distinguishing character of the Greek drama. I need only make one observation on all this; that, thus interpreted, it is the justest picture of a good tragedy, wrote on the ancient rules. And that I have rightly interpreted it, appears farther from what we find in the old quarto,—*An honest method, as wholesome as sweet, and by very much more* HANDSOME *than* FINE, i. e. it had a natural beauty, but none of the fucus of false art.

2. A second proof that this speech was given to be admired, is from the intrinsick merit of the speech itself; which contains the description of a circumstance very happily imagined, namely, Ilium and Priam's falling together, with the effect it had on the destroyer.

"—— The hellish Pyrrhus, &c.

To,—

"Repugnant to command.
"The unnerved father falls, &c.

To,—

"—— So after Pyrrhus' pause."

Now this circumstance, illustrated with the fine similitude of the storm is so highly worked up, as to have well deserved a place in Virgil's second book of the *Æneid*, even though the work had been carried on to that perfection which the Roman poet had conceived.

3. The third proof is, from the effects which followed on the recital. Hamlet, his best character, approves it; the player is deeply affected in repeating it; and only the foolish Polonius tired with it. We have said enough before of Hamlet's sentiments. As for the player, he changes colour, and the tears start from his eyes. But our author was too good a judge of nature to make bombast and unnatural sentiment produce such an effect. Nature and Horace both instructed him:

"Si vis me flere, dolendum est
"Primùm ipsi tibi, tunc tua me infortunia lædent,
"Telephe, vel Peleu. MALE SI MANDATA LOQUERIS,
"Aut dormitabo aut ridebo."

And it may be worth observing, that Horace gives this precept particularly to show, that bombast and unnatural sentiments are incapable of moving the tender passions, which he is directing the poet how to raise. For, in the lines just before, he gives this rule:

"Telephus & Peleus, cùm pauper & exul uterque,
"Projicit ampullas, & sesquipedalia verba."

Not that I would deny, that very bad lines in bad tragedies have had this effect. But then it always proceeds from one or other of these causes:

1. Either when the subject is domestick, and the scene lies at home; the spectators, in this case, become interested in the fortunes of the distressed; and their thoughts are so much taken up with the subject, that they are not at liberty to attend to the poet; who otherwise, by his faulty sentiments and diction, would have

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stifled the emotions springing up from a sense of the distress.—But this is nothing to the case in hand. For, as Hamlet says:

"What 's Hecuba to him, or he to Hecuba."

2. When bad lines raise this affection, they are bad in the other extreme; low, abject, and grovelling, instead of being highly figurative and swelling; yet, when attended with a natural simplicity, they have force enough to strike illiterate and simple minds. The tragedies of Banks will justify both these observations.

But if any one will still say, that Shakspeare intended to represent a player unnaturally and fantastically affected, we must appeal to Hamlet, that is, to Shakspeare himself in this matter; who, on the reflection he makes upon the player's emotion, in order to excite his own revenge, gives not the least hint that the player was unnaturally or injudiciously moved. On the contrary, his fine description of the actor's emotion shows, he thought just otherwise:

"——— this player here,
"But in a fiction, in a dream of passion,
"Could force his soul so to his own conceit,
"That from her working all his visage wan'd:
"Tears in his eyes, distraction in his aspect,
"A broken voice," &c.

And indeed had Hamlet esteemed this emotion any thing unnatural, it had been a very improper circumstance to spur him to his purpose.

As Shakspeare has here shown the effects which a fine description of nature, heightened with all the ornaments of art, had upon an intelligent player, whose business habituates him to enter intimately and deeply into the characters of men and manners, and to give nature its free workings on all occasions; so he has artfully shown what effects the very same scene would have upon a quite different man, Polonius; *by nature*, very weak and very artificial [two qualities, though commonly enough joined in life, yet generally so much disguised as not to be seen by common eyes to be together; and which an ordinary poet durst not have brought so near one another]; *by discipline*, practised in a species of wit and eloquence, which was stiff, forced, and pedantic; and *by trade* a politician, and therefore, of consequence, without any of the affecting notices of humanity. Such is the man whom Shakspeare has judiciously chosen to represent the false taste of that audience which had condemned the play here reciting. When the actor comes to the finest and most pathetic part of the speech, Polonius cries out *This is too long;* on which Hamlet, in contempt of his ill judgment, replies, *It shall to the barber's with thy beard;* [intimating that, by this judgment, it appeared that all his wisdom lay in his length of beard]. *Pr'ythee, say on. He's for a jig or a tale of bawdry* [the common entertainment of that time, as well as this, of the people] *or he sleeps; say on.* And yet this man of modern taste, who stood all this time perfectly unmoved with the forcible imagery of the relator, no sooner hears,

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amongst many good things, one quaint and fantastical word, put in, I suppose, purposely for this end, than he professes his approbation of the propriety and dignity of it. *That's good. Mobled queen is good.* On the whole then, I think, it plainly appears, that the long quotation is not given to be ridiculed and laughed at, but to be admired. The character given of the play, by Hamlet, cannot be ironical. The passage itself is extremely beautiful. It has the effect that all pathetick relations, naturally written, should have; and it is condemned, or regarded with indifference, by one of a wrong, unnatural taste. From hence (to observe it by the way) the actors, in the representation of this play, may learn how this speech ought to be spoken, and what appearance Hamlet ought to assume during the recital.

That which supports the common opinion, concerning this passage, is the turgid expression in some parts of it; which, they think, could never be given by the poet to be commended. We shall, therefore, in the next place, examine the lines most obnoxious to censure, and see how much, allowing the charge, this will make for the induction of their conclusion:

"Pyrrhus at Priam drives, in rage strikes wide,
"But with the whiff and wind of his fell sword
"The unnerved father falls."

And again,—

"Out, out, thou strumpet fortune! All you gods,
"In general synod, take away her power:
"Break all the spokes and fellies from her wheel,
"And bowl the round nave down the hill of heaven,
"As low as to the fiends."

Now whether these be bombast or not, is not the question; but whether Shakspeare esteemed them so. That he did not so esteem them appears from his having used the very same thoughts in the same expressions, in his best plays, and given them to his principal characters, where he aims at the sublime. As in the following passages:

Troilus, in *Troilus and Cressida*, far outstrains the execution of Pyrrhus's sword in the character he gives of Hector's:

"When many times the *caitive* Grecians *fall*
"*Even in the fan and wind of your fair sword*,
"You bid them rise and live."

Cleopatra, in *Antony and Cleopatra*, rails at fortune in the same manner:

"No, let me speak, and let me rail so high,
"*That the false huswife Fortune break her wheel*,
"Provok'd at my offence."

But another use may be made of these quotations; a discovery of this recited play: which, letting us into a circumstance of our author's life (as a writer) hitherto unknown, was the reason I have been so large upon this question. I think then it appears, from what has been said, that the play in dispute was Shakspeare's own; and that this was the occasion of writing it. He was desirous, as soon as he had found his strength, of restoring the chaste-

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ness and regularity of the ancient stage: and therefore composed this tragedy on the model of the Greek drama, as may be seen by throwing so much *action* into *relation*. But his attempt proved fruitless; and the raw, unnatural taste, then prevalent, forced him back again into his old Gothic manner. For which he took this revenge upon his audience. *Warburton.*

I formerly thought that the lines which have given rise to the foregoing observations, were extracted from some old play, of which it appeared to me probable that Christopher Marlowe was the author; but whatever Shakspeare's view in producing them may have been, I am now decidedly of opinion they were written by himself, not in any former unsuccessful piece, but expressly for the play of *Hamlet*. It is observable that what Dr. Warburton calls "the fine similitude of the storm," is likewise found in our poet's *Venus and Adonis*. *Malone.*

The praise which Hamlet bestows on this piece is certainly disgembled, and agrees very well with the character of madness, which, before witnesses, he thought it necessary to support. The speeches before us have so little merit, that nothing but an affectation of singularity, could have influenced Dr. Warburton to undertake their defence. The poet, perhaps, meant to exhibit a just resemblance of some of the plays of his own age, in which the faults were too general and too glaring to permit a few splendid passages to atone for them. The player knew his trade, and spoke the lines in an affecting manner, because Hamlet had declared them to be pathetick, or might be in reality a little moved by them; for, "There are less degrees of nature (says Dryden) by which some faint emotions of pity and terror are raised in us, as a less engine will raise a less proportion of weight, though not so much as one of Archimedes' making." The mind of the prince, it must be confessed, was fitted for the reception of gloomy ideas, and his tears were ready at a slight solicitation. It is by no means proved, that Shakspeare has *employed the same thoughts clothed in the same expressions, in his best plays.* If he bids *the false huswife Fortune break her wheel*, he does not desire her to *break all its spokes*; nay, *even its periphery, and make use of the nave afterwards for such an immeasurable cast.* Though if what Dr. Warburton has said should be found in any instance to be exactly true, what can we infer from thence, but that Shakspeare was sometimes wrong in spite of conviction, and in the hurry of writing committed those very faults which his judgement could detect in others? Dr. Warburton is inconsistent in his assertions concerning the literature of Shakspeare. In a note on *Troilus and Cressida*, he affirms, that his want of learning kept him from being acquainted with the writings of Homer; and, in this instance, would suppose him capable of producing a complete tragedy *written on the ancient rules*; and that the speech before us had sufficient merit to entitle it to a place *in the second book of Virgil's Æneid, even though the work had been carried to that perfection which the Roman poet had conceived.**

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Had Shakspeare made one unsuccessful attempt in the manner of the ancients (that he had any knowledge of their rules, remains to be proved,) it would certainly have been recorded by contemporary writers, among whom Ben Jonson would have been the first. Had his darling ancients been unskilfully imitated by a rival poet, he would at least have preserved the memory of the fact, to show how unsafe it was for any one, who was not as thorough a scholar as himself, to have meddled with their sacred remains.

"Within that circle none durst walk but he." He has represented Inigo Jones as being ignorant of the very names of those classick authors, whose architecture he undertook to correct; in his *Poetaster* he has in several places hinted at our poet's injudicious use of words, and seems to have pointed his ridicule more than once at some of his descriptions and characters. It is true that he has praised him, but it was not while that praise could have been of any service to him; and posthumous applause is always to be had on easy conditions. Happy it was for Shakspeare, that he took nature for his guide, and, engaged in the warm pursuit of her beauties, left to Jonson the repositories of learning: so has he escaped a contest which might have rendered his life uneasy, and bequeathed to our possession the more valuable copies from nature herself: for Shakspeare was (says Dr. Hurd, in his notes on Horace's Art of Poetry) "the first that broke through the bondage of classical superstition. And he owed this felicity, as he did some others, to his want of what is called the advantage of a learned education. Thus uninfluenced by the weight of early prepossession, he struck at once into the road of nature and common sense: and without designing, without knowing it, hath left us in his historical plays, with all their anomalies, an exacter resemblance of the Athenian stage than is any where to be found in its most professed admirers and copyists." Again, ibid: "It is possible, there are, who think, *a want of reading*, as well as vast superiority of genius, hath contributed to lift this astonishing man, to the glory of being esteemed the most original THINKER and SPEAKER, since the times of Homer."

To this extract I may add the sentiments of Dr. Edward Young on the same occasion. "Who knows whether Shakspeare might

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* It appears to me not only that Shakspeare had the favourable opinion of these lines which he makes Hamlet express, but that they were extracted from some play which he, at a more early period, had either produced or projected upon the story of *Dido and Æneas*. The verses recited are far superior to those of any coeval writer: the parallel passage in Marlowe and Nashe's *Dido* will not bear the comparison. Possibly, indeed, it might have been his first attempt, before *the divinity that lodg'd within him* had instructed him to despise the tumid and unnatural style so much and so unjustly admired in his predecessors or contemporaries, and which he afterwards so happily ridiculed in "the swaggering vaine of Ancient Pistol." *Ritson.*

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not have thought less, if he had read more? Who knows if he might not have laboured under the load of Jonson's learning, as Enceladus under Ætna? His mighty genius, indeed, through the most mountainous oppression would have breathed out some of his inextinguishable fire; yet possibly, he might not have risen up into that giant, that much more than common man, at which we now gaze with amazement and delight. Perhaps he was as learned as his dramatick province required; for whatever other learning he wanted, he was master of two books, which the last conflagration alone can destroy; the book of nature, and that of man. These he had by heart, and has transcribed many admirable pages of them into his immortal works. These are the fountain-head, whence the Castalian streams of *original* composition flow; and these are often mudded by other waters, though waters in their distinct channel, most wholesome and pure; as two chemical liquors, separately clear as chrystal, grow foul by mixture, and offend the sight. So that he had not only as much learning as his dramatick province required, but, perhaps as it could safely bear. If Milton had spared some of his learning, his muse would have gained more glory than he would have lost by it."

Conjectures on Original Composition.

The first remark of Voltaire on this tragedy, is that the former king had been poisoned by his brother and *his queen*. The guilt of the latter, however, is far from being ascertained. The Ghost forbears to accuse her as an accessary, and very forcibly recommends her to the mercy of her son. I may add, that her conscience appears undisturbed during the exhibition of the mock tragedy, which produces so visible a disorder in her husband who was really criminal. The last observation of the same author has no greater degree of veracity to boast of; for now, says he, all the actors in the piece were swept away, and one Monsieur Fortenbras is introduced to conclude it. Can this be true, when Horatio, Osric, Voltimand, and Cornelius survive? These, together with the whole court of Denmark, are supposed to be present at the catastrophe, so that we are not indebted to the Norwegian chief for having kept the stage from vacancy.

Monsieur de Voltaire has since transmitted, in an epistle to the Academy of Belles Lettres, some remarks on the late French translation of Shakspeare; but, alas! no traces of genius or vigour are discoverable in this *crambe repetita*, which is notorious only for its insipidity, fallacy, and malice. It serves indeed to show an apparent decline of talents and spirit in its writer, who no longer relies on his own ability to depreciate a rival, but appeals in a plaintive strain to the queen and princesses of France for their assistance to stop the further circulation of Shakspeare's renown.

Impartiality, nevertheless, must acknowledge that his private correspondence displays a superior degree of animation. Perhaps an ague shook him when he appealed to the publick on this subject; but the effects of a fever seem to predominate in his subsequent letter to Monsieur D'Argenteuil on the same occasion; for

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such a letter it is as our John Dennis (while his phrenzy lasted) might be supposed to have written. "C'est moi qui autrefois parlai le premier de ce Shakspeare: c'est moi qui le premier montrai aux François quelques perles quels j'avois trouvé dans son enorme *fumier*." Mrs. Montague, the justly celebrated authoress of the *Essay on the Genius and Writings* of our author, was in Paris, and in the circle where these ravings of the Frenchman were first publickly recited. On hearing the illiberal expression already quoted, with no less elegance than readiness she replied—"C'est un *fumier* qui a fertilizé une terre bien ingrate."—In short, the author of *Zayre, Mahomet*, and *Semiramis*, possesses all the mischievous qualities of a midnight felon, who, in the hope to conceal his guilt, sets the house he has robbed on fire.

As for Messieurs D'Alembert and Marmontel, they might safely be passed over with that neglect which their impotence of criticism deserves. Voltaire, in spite of his natural disposition to vilify an English poet, by adopting sentiments, characters, and situations from Shakspeare, has bestowed on him involuntary praise. Happily, he has not been disgraced by the worthless encomiums or disfigured by the aukward imitations of the other pair, who "follow in the chace not like hounds that hunt, but like those who fill up the cry." When D'Alembert declares that more sterling sense is to be met with in ten French verses than in thirty English ones, contempt is all that he provokes—such contempt as can only be exceeded by that which every scholar will express, who may chance to look into the prose translation of Lucan by Marmontel, with the vain expectation of discovering either the sense, the spirit, or the whole of the original. *Steevens.*

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TIMON OF ATHENS.

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TIMON OF ATHENS.

THE story of the Misanthrope is told in almost every collection of the time, and particularly in two books, with which Shakspeare was intimately acquainted; the *Palace of Pleasure*, and the *English Plutarch*. Indeed from a passage in an old play, called *Jack Drum's Entertainment*, I conjecture that he had before made his appearance on the stage. *Farmer*.

The passage in *Jack Drum's Entertainment*, or *Pasquil and Katherine*, 1601, is this:

"Come, I 'll be as sociable as *Timon of Athens*."

But the allusion is so slight, that it might as well have been borrowed from Plutarch or the novel.

Mr. Strutt the engraver, to whom our antiquaries are under no inconsiderable obligations, has in his possession a MS. play on this subject. It appears to have been written, or transcribed, about the year 1600. There is a scene in it resembling Shakspeare's banquet given by Timon to his flatterers. Instead of *warm water* he sets before them *stones painted like artichokes*, and afterwards beats them out of the room. He then retires to the woods, attended by his faithful steward, who, (like Kent in *King Lear*) has disguised himself to continue his services to his master. Timon, in the last Act, is followed by his fickle mistress, &c. after he was reported to have discovered a hidden treasure by digging. The piece itself (though it appears to be the work of an academick) is a wretched one. The *personæ dramatis* are as follows:

"The actors names.

"Timon.
"Laches, his faithful servant.
"Eutrapelus, a dissolute young man.
"Gelasimus, a cittie heyre.
"Pseudocheus, a lying travailer.
"Demeas, an orator.
"Philargurus, a covetous churlish ould man.
"Hermogenes, a fidler.
"Abyssus, a usurer.
"Lollio, a euntrey clowne, Philargurus sonne.
"Stilpo, } Two lying philosophers.
"Speusippus, }
"Grunnio, a lean servant of Philargurus.
"Obba, Tymon's butler.
"Pœdio, Gelasimus page.
"Two serjeants.
"A sailor.
"Callimela, Philargurus daughter.
"Blatte, her prattling nurse.

"SCENE, Athens." *Stevens*.

Shakspeare undoubtedly formed this play on the passage in Plutarch's *Life of Antony* relative to Timon, and not on the twenty-eighth novel of the first volume of Painter's *Palace of Pleasure*; because he is there merely described as "a man-hater, of a strange and beastly nature," without any cause assigned; where-

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as Plutarch furnished our author with the following hint to work upon: "Antonius forsook the citie, and companie of his friendes, —saying, that he would lead Timon's life, because he had the like wrong offered him, that was offered unto Timon; and *for the unthankfulness of those he had done good unto, and whom he tooke to be his friendes, he was angry with all men, and would trust no man.*"

To the manuscript play mentioned by Mr. Steevens, our author, I have no doubt, was also indebted for some other circumstances. Here he found the faithful steward, the banquet-scene, and the story of Timon's being possessed of great sums of gold which he had dug up in the woods: a circumstance which he could not have had from Lucian, there being then no translation of the dialogue that relates to this subject.

Spon says, there is a building near Athens, yet remaining, called *Timon's Tower.*

Timon of Athens was written, I imagine, in the year 1610.

Malone.

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PERSONS REPRESENTED.

Timon, *a noble* Athenian.

Lucius,
Lucullus,
Sempronius, } *lords, and flatterers of* Timon.

Ventidius, *one of* Timon's *false friends.*

Apemantus, *a churlish philosopher.*

Alcibiades, *an* Athenian *general.*

Flavius, *steward to* Timon.

Flaminius,
Lucilius,
Servilius, } Timon's *servants.*

Caphis,
Philotus,
Titus,
Lucius,
Hortensius, } *servants to* Timon's *creditors.*

Two servants of Varro, *and the servant of* Isidore; *two of* Timon's *creditors.*

Cupid *and maskers. Three strangers.*

Poet, painter, jeweller, and merchant.

An old Athenian. *A page. A fool.*

Phrynia,[1]
Timandra, } *mistresses to* Alcibiades.

Other lords, senators, officers, soldiers, thieves, and attendants.

SCENE,

Athens; *and the woods adjoining.*

[1] *Phrynia,*] (or as this name should have been written by Shakspeare, *Phryne,*) was an Athenian courtezan so exquisitely beautiful, that when her judges were proceeding to condemn her for numerous and enormous offences, a sight of her bosom (which, as we learn from Quintilian, had been artfully denuded by her advocate,) disarmed the court of its severity, and secured her life from the sentence of the law. *Steevens.*

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TIMON OF ATHENS.

ACT I.....SCENE I.

Athens. *A Hall in* Timon's *House.*

Enter Poet, Painter, Jeweller, Merchant,[2] *and Others, at several Doors.*

Poet. Good day, sir.[3]
Pain. I am glad you are well.
Poet. I have not seen you long; How goes the world?
Pain. It wears, sir, as it grows.
Poet. Ay, that 's well known:
But what particular rarity?[4] what strange,

[2] —— *Jeweller, Merchant,*] In the old copy: *Enter* &c. *Merchant and* Mercer, &c. *Steevens.*

[3] Poet. *Good day, sir.*] It would be less abrupt to begin the play thus:

Poet. Good day.
Pain. Good day, sir: *I am glad you 're well. Farmer.*

The present deficiency in the metre also pleads strongly in behalf of the supplemental words proposed by Dr. Farmer. *Steevens.*

[4] *But what particular rarity?* &c.] I cannot but think that this passage is at present in confusion. The poet asks a question, and stays not for an answer, nor has his question any apparent drift or consequence. I would range the passage thus:

Poet. *Ay, that 's well known.*
But what particular rarity? what so strange,
That *manifold record not matches?*
Pain. *See!*
Poet. *Magick of bounty!* &c.

It may not be improperly observed here, that as there is only one copy of this play, no help can be had from collation, and more liberty must be allowed to conjecture. *Johnson.*

Johnson supposes that there is some error in this passage, because the Poet asks a question, and stays not for an answer; and therefore suggests a new arrangement of it. But there is nothing more common in real life than questions asked in that manner. And with respect to his proposed arrangement, I can by no means approve of it; for as the Poet and the Painter are going to pay their court to Timon, it would be strange if the latter should point out to the former, as *a particular rarity, which manifold re-*

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Which manifold record not matches? See,
Magick of bounty! all these spirits thy power
Hath conjur'd to attend. I know the merchant.
Pain. I know them both; t'other 's a jeweller.
Mer. O, 'tis a worthy lord!
Jew. Nay, that 's most fix'd.
Mer. A most incomparable man; breath'd, as it were,
To an untirable and continuate goodness:[5]
He passes.[6]
Jew. I have a jewel here.[7]
Mer. O, pray, let 's see 't: For the lord Timon, sir?
Jew. If he will touch the estimate:[8] But, for that——
Poet. *When we for recompense*[9] *have prais'd the vile,*

cord could not match, a merchant and a jeweller, who came there on the same errand. *M. Mason.*

The Poet is led *by what the Painter has said,* to ask whether any thing very strange and unparalleled had lately happened, without any expectation that any such had happened;—and is prevented from waiting for an answer by observing so many conjured by Timon's bounty to attend. "See, Magick of bounty!" &c. This surely is very natural. *Malone.*

[5] —— breath'd, *as it were,*
To an untirable and continuate *goodness:*] *Breathed* is *inured by constant practice;* so trained as not to be wearied. To *breathe* a horse, is to exercise him for the course. *Johnson.*
So, in *Hamlet:*
"It is the *breathing* time of day with me." *Steevens.*
—— *continuate* —] This word is used by many ancient English writers. Thus, by Chapman, in his version of the fourth Book of the *Odyssey:*
"Her handmaids join'd in a *continuate* yell."
Again, in the tenth Book:
"—— environ'd round
"With one *continuate* rock: —." *Steevens.*

[6] *He* passes.] i. e. exceeds, goes beyond common bounds. So, in *The Merry Wives of Windsor:*
"Why this *passes,* master Ford." *Steevens.*

[7] *He passes.——*
I have a jewel here.] The syllable wanting in this line, might be restored by reading—
He passes.—Look, *I have a jewel here.* *Steevens.*

[8] —— *touch the estimate:*] Come up to the price. *Johnson.*

[9] *When we for recompense* &c.] We must here suppose the poet busy in reading his own work; and that these three lines are the introduction of the poem addressed to Timon, which he afterwards gives the Painter an account of. *Warburton.*

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It stains the glory in that happy verse
Which aptly sings the good.

Mer. 'Tis a good form. [*Looking on the Jewel.*

Jew. And rich: here is a water, look you.

Pain. You are rapt, sir, in some work, some dedication
To the great lord.

Poet. A thing slipp'd idly from me.
Our poesy is as a gum, which[1] oozes
From whence 'tis nourished: The fire i' the flint
Shows not, till it be struck; our gentle flame
Provokes itself, and, like the current, flies
Each bound it chafes.[2] What have you there?

[1] —— *which* oozes —] The folio copy reads—which *uses*. The modern editors have given it—which *issues*. *Johnson.*

Gum and *issues* were inserted by Mr. Pope; *oozes* by Dr. Johnson. *Malone.*

The two oldest copies read—

Our poesie is as a gowne *which* uses. *Steevens.*

[2] —— *and, like a current, flies*
Each bound it chafes.] Thus the folio reads, and rightly. In later editions—*chases*. *Warburton.*

This speech of the Poet is very obscure. He seems to boast the copiousness and facility of his vein, by declaring that verses drop from a poet as gums from odoriferous trees, and that his flame kindles itself without the violence necessary to elicit sparkles from the flint. What follows next? that it, *like a current, flies each bound it chafes*. This may mean, that it expands itself notwithstanding all obstructions; but the images in the comparison are so ill sorted, and the effect so obscurely expressed, that I cannot but think something omitted that connected the last sentence with the former. It is well known that the players often shorten speeches to quicken the representation: and it may be suspected, that they sometimes performed their amputations with more haste than judgment. *Johnson.*

Perhaps the sense is, that having *touched on one subject, it flies off in quest of another*. The old copy seems to read—

Each bound it chases.

The letters *f* and *ſ* are not always to be distinguished from each other, especially when the types have been much worn, as in the first folio. If *chases* be the true reading, it is best explained by the "—*se sequiturque fugitque*—" of the Roman poet. Somewhat similar occurs in *The Tempest:*

"Do *chase* the ebbing Neptune, and do *fly* him
"When he pursues." *Steevens.*

The obscurity of this passage arises merely from the mistake of the editors, who have joined in one, what was intended by Shakspeare as two distinct sentences.—It should be pointed thus, and then the sense will be evident:

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Pain. A picture, sir.—And when comes your book forth?[3]

Poet. Upon the heels[4] of my presentment,[5] sir. Let 's see your piece.

Pain. 'Tis a good piece.[6]

Poet. So 'tis: this comes off well and excellent.[7]

——— *our gentle flame*
Provokes itself, and like the current flies;—
Each bound it chafes.

Our gentle flame animates itself; it flies like a current; and every obstacle serves but to increase its force. *M. Mason.*

In *Julius Cæsar*, we have—

"The troubled Tiber *chafing* with her shores, —."

Again, in *The Legend of Pierce Gaveston*, by Michael Drayton, 1594:

"Like as the ocean, *chafing* with his *bounds*,
"With raging billowes *flies* against the rocks,
"And to the shore sends forth his hideous sounds," &c.
Malone.

This jumble of incongruous images, seems to have been designed, and put into the mouth of the Poetaster, that the reader might appreciate his talents: his language therefore should not be considered in the abstract. *Henley.*

[3] —— And *when comes your book forth?*] *And* was supplied by Sir T. Hanmer, to perfect the measure. *Steevens.*

[4] *Upon the heels* &c.] As soon as my book has been presented to lord Timon. *Johnson.*

[5] —— *presentment,*] The patrons of Shakspeare's age do not appear to have been all *Timons*.

"I did determine not to have dedicated my play to any body, because *forty shillings* I care not for, and above, few or none will bestow on these matters." Preface to *A Woman is a Weathercock*, by N. Field, 1612. *Steevens.*

It should, however, be remembered, that forty shillings at that time were equal to at least six, perhaps eight, pounds at this day. *Malone.*

[6] *'Tis a good piece.*] As the metre is here defective, it is not improbable that our author originally wrote—

'Tis a good piece, indeed.

So, in *The Winter's Tale:*

"'Tis grace *indeed.*" *Steevens.*

[7] —— *this* comes off *well and excellent.*] The meaning is, the figure rises well from the canvas. *C'est bien relevé. Johnson.*

What is meant by this term of applause I do not exactly know. It occurs again in *The Widow*, by Ben Jonson, Fletcher, and Middleton:

"It *comes off* very fair yet."

Again, in *A Trick to catch the Old One*, 1608: "Put a good tale in

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Pain. Indifferent.
Poet. Admirable: How this grace
Speaks his own standing![8] what a mental power

his ear, so that it *comes off cleanly*, and there 's a horse and man for us. I warrant thee." Again, in the first part of Marston's *Antonio and Mellida:*

"*Fla.* Faith, the song will seem to *come off* hardly.
"*Catz.* Troth, not a whit, if you seem to *come off* quickly."
Steevens.

[8] ——— *How this* grace
Speaks his own standing!] This relates to the attitude of the figure, and means that it stands judiciously on its own centre. And not only so, but that it has a graceful standing likewise. Of which the poet in *Hamlet*, speaking of another picture, says:

"A *station*, like the herald, Mercury,
"New-lighted on a heaven-kissing hill."

which lines Milton seems to have had in view, where he says of Raphael:

"At once on th' eastern *cliff of Paradise*
"He *lights*, and to his proper shape returns.
"—— *Like Maia's son he stood.*" *Warburton.*

This sentence seems to me obscure, and, however explained, not very forcible. *This grace speaks his own standing*, is only, *The gracefulness of this figure shows how it stands.* I am inclined to think something corrupted. It would be more natural and clear thus:

——— *How this* standing
Speaks his own graces!——

How this posture displays its own *gracefulness.* But I will indulge conjecture further, and propose to read:

——— *How this grace*
Speaks understanding! *what a mental power*
This eye shoots forth! *Johnson.*

The passage, to my apprehension at least, *speaks its own meaning*, which is, how the graceful attitude of this figure proclaims that it stands firm on its centre, or gives evidence in favour of its own fixure. *Grace* is introduced as bearing witness to *propriety.* A similar expression occurs in *Cymbeline*, Act II, sc. iv:

"——— never saw I figures
"So likely to *report themselves*" *Steevens.*

I cannot reconcile myself to Johnson's or Warburton's explanations of this passage, which are such as the words cannot possibly imply. I am rather inclined to suppose, that the figure alluded to was a representation of one of the Graces, and, as they are always supposed to be females, should read the passage thus:

——— *How this Grace* (with a capital G)
Speaks its *own standing!*——

This slight alteration removes every difficulty, for Steevens's ex-

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This eye shoots forth! how big imagination
Moves in this lip! to the dumbness of the gesture
One might interpret.[9]
Pain. It is a pretty mocking of the life.
Here is a touch; Is 't good?
Poet. I 'll say of it,
It tutors nature: artificial strife[1]
Lives in these touches, livelier than life.

planation of the latter words is clearly right; and there is surely but little difference between *its* and *his* in the trace of the letters.

This amendment is strongly supported by the pronoun *this*, prefixed to the word *Grace*, as it proves that what the Poet pointed out was some real object, not merely an abstract idea. *M. Mason.*

[9] —— *to the dumbness of gesture*
One might interpret.] The figure, though dumb, seems to have a capacity of speech. The allusion is to the puppet-shows, or motions, as they were termed in our author's time. The person who spoke for the puppets was called an *interpreter*. See a note on *Hamlet*, Act III, sc. v. *Malone.*

Rather—one might venture to supply words to such intelligible action. Such significant gesture ascertains the sentiment that should accompany it. *Steevens.*

[1] —— *artificial* strife —] *Strife* for action or motion. *Warburton.*

Strife is either the contest of art with nature:

"Hic ille est *Raphael*, timuit, quo sospite vinci
"Rerum magna parens, & moriente mori."

or it is the contrast of forms or opposition of colours. *Johnson.*

So, under the print of Noah Bridges, by Faithorne:

"Faithorne, with nature at a noble *strife*,
"Hath paid the author a great share of life." &c.
Steevens.

And Ben Jonson, on the head of Shakspeare by Droeshout:

"This figure which thou here seest put,
"It was for gentle Shakspeare cut:
"Wherein the *graver* had a strife
"With *nature*, to *out-doo* the *life*." *Henley.*

That *artificial strife* means, as Dr. Johnson has explained it, *the contest of art with nature*, and not *the contrast of forms* or *opposition of colours*, may appear from our author's *Venus and Adonis*, where the same thought is more clearly expressed:

"Look, when a *painter* would *surpass* the *life*,
"In limning out a well-proportion'd steed,
"His *art* with *nature's workmanship* at *strife*,
"As if the *dead* the *living* should exceed
"So did this horse excell," &c.

In Drayton's *Mortimeriados*, printed I believe in 1596, (afterwards entitled *The Barons' Wars*,) there are two lines nearly resembling these:

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Enter certain Senators, *and pass over.*

Pain. How this lord 's follow'd!

Poet. The senators of Athens;—Happy men![2]

Pain. Look, more!

Poet. You see this confluence, this great flood of visitors.[3]

I have, in this rough work, shap'd out a man,
Whom this beneath world[4] doth embrace and hug
With amplest entertainment: My free drift
Halts not particularly,[5] but moves itself
In a wide sea of wax:[6] no levell'd malice[7]

"Done for the last with such exceeding *life*,
"As *art* therein *with nature* were *at strife*." *Malone.*

[2] —— *Happy* men!] Mr. Theobald reads—happy *man*; and certainly the emendation is sufficiently plausible, though the old reading may well stand. *Malone.*

The text is right. The Poet envies or admires the felicity of the senators in being Timon's friends, and familiarly admitted to his table, to partake of his good cheer, and experience the effects of his bounty. *Ritson.*

[3] —— *this confluence, this great flood of visitors.*]
Mane salutantûm totis vomit ædibus undam. *Johnson.*

[4] —— *this* beneath *world*—] So, in *Measure for Measure*, we have—"This *under* generation;" and in *King Richard II.* "—the *lower* world." *Steevens.*

[5] *Halts not particularly,*] My design does not stop at any single character. *Johnson.*

[6] *In a wide sea of wax:*] Anciently they wrote upon waxen tables with an iron style. *Hanmer.*

I once thought with Sir T. Hanmer, that this was only an allusion to the Roman practice of writing with a style on waxen tablets; but it appears that the same custom prevailed in England about the year 1395, and might have been heard of by Shakspeare. It seems also to be pointed out by implication in many of our old collegiate establishments. See Warton's *History of English Poetry*, Vol. III, p. 151. *Steevens.*

Mr. Astle observes in his very ingenious work *On the Origin and Progress of Writing*, quarto, 1784, that "the practice of writing on table-books covered with *wax* was not entirely laid aside till the commencement of the *fourteenth* century." As Shakspeare, I believe, was not a very profound English antiquary, it is surely improbable that he should have had any knowledge of a practice which had been disused for more than two centuries before he was born. The Roman practice he might have learned from Golding's translation of the ninth Book of Ovid's *Metamorphoses:*

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Infects one comma in the course I hold;
But flies an eagle flight, bold, and forth on,
Leaving no tract behind.

Pain. How shall I understand you?

Poet. I 'll unbolt[8] to you.
You see how all conditions, how all minds,
(As well of glib and slippery creatures,[9] as
Of grave and austere quality,) tender down
Their services to lord Timon: his large fortune,
Upon his good and gracious nature hanging,
Subdues and properties to his love and tendance
All sorts of hearts;[1] yea, from the glass-fac'd flatterer[2]
To Apemantus, that few things loves better
Than to abhor himself: even he drops down
The knee before him,[3] and returns in peace
Most rich in Timon's nod.

Pain. I saw them speak together.[4]

"Her right hand holds the pen, her left doth hold the emptie *waxe*," &c. *Malone.*

7 —— *no* levell'd *malice* &c.] To *level* is to *aim*, to point the shot at a mark. Shakspeare's meaning is, my poem is not a satire written with any particular view, or *levelled* at any single person; I fly like an eagle into a general expanse of life, and leave not, by any private mischief, the trace of my passage. *Johnson.*

8 *I'll unbolt* —] I 'll open, I 'll explain. *Johnson.*

9 —— *glib and slippery creatures,*] Sir T. Hanmer, and Dr. Warburton after him, read—*natures*. *Slippery* is *smooth*, unresisting. *Johnson.*

1 Subdues ——
All sorts of hearts;] So, in *Othello*:
"My *heart 's subdued*
"Even to the very quality of my lord." *Steevens.*

2 —— *glass-fac'd flatterer* —] That shows in his look, as by reflection, the looks of his patron. *Johnson.*

3 —— *even he drops down* &c.] Either Shakspeare meant to put a falsehood into the mouth of his Poet, or had not yet thoroughly planned the character of Apemantus; for in the ensuing scenes, his behaviour is as cynical to Timon as to his followers. *Steevens.*

The Poet, seeing that Apemantus paid frequent visits to Timon, naturally concluded that he was equally courteous with his other guests. *Ritson.*

4 *I saw them speak* together.] The word—*together*, which only serves to interrupt the measure, is, I believe, an interpolation, being occasionally omitted by our author, as unnecessary to sense,

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Poet. Sir, I have upon a high and pleasant hill,
Feign'd Fortune to be thron'd: The base o' the mount
Is rank'd with all deserts,[5] all kind of natures,
That labour on the bosom of this sphere
To propagate their states:[6] amongst them all,
Whose eyes are on this sovereign lady[7] fix'd,
One do I personate of lord Timon's frame,
Whom Fortune with her ivory hand wafts to her;
Whose present grace to present slaves and servants
Translates his rivals.

Pain. 'Tis conceiv'd to scope.[8]
This throne, this Fortune, and this hill, methinks,
With one man beckon'd from the rest below,
Bowing his head against the steepy mount
To climb his happiness, would be well express'd
In our condition.[9]

Poet. Nay, sir, but hear me on:
All those which were his fellows but of late,
(Some better than his value) on the moment
Follow his strides, his lobbies fill with tendance,
Rain sacrificial whisperings in his ear,[1]

on similar occasions. Thus, in *Measure for Measure:* "— Bring me to hear them speak;" i. e. to speak together, to converse. Again, in another of our author's plays: "When spoke you last?" Nor is the same phraseology, even at this hour, out of use. *Steevens.*

[5] —— *rank'd with all deserts,*] *Cover'd with ranks* of all kinds of men. *Johnson.*

[6] *To* propagate *their states:*] To advance or improve their various conditions of life. *Johnson.*

[7] *Feign'd* Fortune *to be thron'd:*——
—— *on this* sovereign lady &c.] So, in *The Tempest:*
"—— bountiful *fortune,*
"Now *my dear lady,*" &c. *Malone.*

[8] —— *conceiv'd to scope.*] Properly imagined, appositely, to the purpose. *Johnson.*

[9] *In our* condition.] *Condition* for art. *Warburton.*

[1] *Rain* sacrificial *whisperings in his ear,*] The sense is obvious, and means, in general, *flattering him.* The particular kind of flattery may be collected from the circumstance of its being offered up in *whispers:* which shows it was the calumniating those whom Timon hated or envied, or whose vices were opposite to his own. This offering up, to the person flattered, the murdered reputation of others, Shakspeare, with the utmost beauty of thought and

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Make sacred even his stirrop, and through him
Drink the free air.[2]

Pain. Ay, marry, what of these?

Poet. When Fortune, in her shift and change of mood,
Spurns down her late belov'd, all his dependants,
Which laLour'd after him to the mountain's top,
Even on their knees and hands, let him slip down,[3]
Not one accompanying his declining foot.

Pain. 'Tis common:
A thousand moral paintings I can show,[4]

expression, calls *sacrificial whisperings*, alluding to the victims offered up to idols. *Warburton.*

Whisperings attended with such respect and veneration as accompany sacrifices to the gods. Such, I suppose, is the meaning. *Malone.*

By sacrificial whisperings, I should simply understand whisperings of officious servility, the *incense* of the worshipping parasite to the patron as to a god. These whisperings might probably immolate reputations for the most part, but I should not reduce the epithet in question to that notion here. Mr. Gray has excellently expressed in his Elegy these sacrificial offerings to the great from the poetick tribe:

"To heap the shrine of luxury and pride
"With incense kindled at the muse's flame." *Wakefield.*

[2] —— *through him*
Drink *the free air.*] That is, catch his breath in affected fondness. *Johnson.*

A similar phrase occurs in Ben Jonson's *Every Man in his Humour:* "By this air, the most divine tobacco I every *drank!*" To *drink*, in both these instances, signifies to *inhale*. *Steevens.*

Dr. Johnson's explanation appears to me highly unnatural and unsatisfactory. "To drink the air," like the *haustus ætherios* of Virgil, is merely a poetical phrase for *draw the air*, or *breathe*. To "drink the free air," therefore, "through another," is to breathe freely at his will only; so as to depend on him for the privilege of life: not even to breathe freely without his permission. *Wakefield.*

So, in our author's *Venus and Adonis:*
"His nostrils *drink the air.*"
Again, in *The Tempest:*
"I *drink the air* before me." *Malone.*

[3] —— *let him* slip *down,*] The old copy reads:
—— *let him* sit *down.*
The emendation was made by Mr. Rowe. *Steevens.*

[4] *A thousand moral paintings I can show,*] Shakspeare seems to intend in this dialogue to express some competition between the

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That shall demonstrate these quick blows of fortune[5]
More pregnantly than words. Yet you do well,
To show lord Timon, that mean eyes[6] have seen
The foot above the head.

Trumpets sound. Enter TIMON, *attended; the Servant of* VENTIDIUS *talking with him.*

Tim. Imprison'd is he, say you?[7]

Ven. Serv. Ay, my good lord: five talents is his debt;
His means most short, his creditors most strait:
Your honourable letter he desires
To those have shut him up; which failing to him,[8]
Periods his comfort.[9]

Tim. Noble Ventidius! Well;
I am not of that feather, to shake off

two great arts of imitation. Whatever the poet declares himself to have shown, the painter thinks he could have shown better. *Johnson.*

[5] —— *these quick blows of* fortune —] [Old copy—*fortune's* —]. This was the phraseology of Shakspeare's time, as I have already observed in a note on *King John*, Vol. VII, p. 305, n. 8. The modern editors read, more elegantly,—of *fortune*. The alteration was first made in the second folio, from ignorance of Shakspeare's diction. *Malone.*

Though I cannot impute such a correction to the ignorance of the person who made it, I can easily suppose what is here styled the phraseology of Shakspeare, to be only the mistake of a vulgar transcriber or printer. Had our author been constant in his use of this mode of speech (which is not the case) the propriety of Mr. Malone's remark would have been readily admitted. *Steevens.*

[6] —— *mean eyes* —] i. e. inferior spectators. So, in Wotton's *Letter to Bacon*, dated March the last, 1613: "Before their majesties, and almost as many other *meaner eyes*," &c. *Tollet.*

[7] *Imprison'd* is he, *say you?*] Here we have another interpolation destructive to the metre. Omitting—*is he*, we ought to read:

Imprison'd, say you? Steevens.

[8] —— *which failing* to him,] Thus the second folio. The first omits—*to him*, and consequently mutilates the verse. *Steevens.*

[9] Periods *his comfort.*] To *period* is, perhaps, a verb of Shakspeare's introduction into the English language. I find it, however, used by Heywood, after him, in *A Maidenhead well lost*, 1634:

"How easy could I *period* all my care."

Again, in *The Country Girl*, by T. B. 1647:

"To *period* our vain-grievings." *Steevens.*

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My friend when he must need me.[1] I do know him
A gentleman, that well deserves a help,
Which he shall have: I 'll pay the debt, and free him.

Ven. Serv. Your lordship ever binds him.

Tim. Commend me to him: I will send his ransome;
And, being enfranchis'd, bid him come to me:—
'Tis not enough to help the feeble up,
But to support him after.[2]—Fare you well.

Ven. Serv. All happiness to your honour![3] [*Exit.*

Enter an old Athenian.

Old Ath. Lord Timon, hear me speak.

Tim. Freely, good father.

Old Ath. Thou hast a servant nam'd Lucilius.

Tim. I have so: What of him?

Old Ath. Most noble Timon, call the man before thee.

Tim. Attends he here, or no?—Lucilius!

Enter LUCILIUS.

Luc. Here, at your lordship's service.

Old Ath. This fellow here, lord Timon, this thy creature,
By night frequents my house. I am a man
That from my first have been inclin'd to thrift;
And my estate deserves an heir more rais'd,
Than one which holds a trencher.

Tim. Well; what further?

Old Ath. One only daughter have I, no kin else,
On whom I may confer what I have got:
The maid is fair, o' the youngest for a bride,
And I have bred her at my dearest cost,

[1] —— must *need me.*] i. e. when he is *compelled* to have need of my assistance; or, as Mr. Malone has more happily explained the phrase,—"cannot but want my assistance." *Steevens.*

[2] *'Tis not enough* &c.] This thought is better expressed by Dr. Madden in his *Elegy on Archbishop Boulter:*

"More than they ask'd he gave; and deem'd it mean
"Only to help the poor—to beg again." *Johnson.*

It has been said that Dr. Johnson was paid ten guineas by Dr. Madden for correcting this poem. *Steevens.*

[3] —— *your honour!*] The common address to a lord in our author's time, was *your honour*, which was indifferently used with your lordship. See any old letter, or dedication of that age; and Vol XI. p 95, where a Pursuivant, speaking to *Lord* Hastings, says,—"I thank *your honour.*" *Steevens.*

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In qualities of the best. This man of thine
Attempts her love: I pr'ythee, noble lord,
Join with me to forbid him her resort;
Myself have spoke in vain.

Tim. The man is honest.

Old Ath. Therefore he will be, Timon:[4]
His honesty rewards him in itself,
It must not bear my daughter.[5]

Tim. Does she love him?

Old Ath. She is young, and apt:

[4] *Therefore he will be, Timon:*] The thought is closely expressed, and obscure: but this seems the meaning: "If the man be honest, my lord, for that reason he will be so in this; and not endeavour at the injustice of gaining my daughter without my consent" *Warburton.*

I rather think an emendation necessary, and read:

Therefore well be him, *Timon:*
His honesty rewards him in itself

That is, "If he is honest, *bene sit illi*, I wish him the proper happiness of an honest man, but his honesty gives him no claim to my daughter." The first transcriber probably wrote—*will be with him*, which the next, not understanding, changed to,—*he will be.* *Johnson.*

I think Dr. Warburton's explanation is best, because it exacts no change. So, in *King Henry VIII:*

"—— May he continue
"Long in his highness' favour; *and do justice*
"*For truth's sake and his conscience.*"

Again, more appositely, in *Cymbeline:*

"This hath been
"Your faithful servant: I dare lay mine honour
"*He will remain so.*" *Steevens.*

Therefore he will be, *Timon:*] Therefore he will continue to be so, and is sure of being sufficiently rewarded by the consciousness of virtue; and he does not need the additional blessing of a beautiful and accomplished wife.

It has been objected, I forget by whom, if the old Athenian means to say that Lucilius will still continue to be virtuous, what occasion has he to apply to Timon to interfere relative to this marriage? But this is making Shakspeare write *by the card.* The words mean undoubtedly, that he will be honest in his *general conduct* through life; in every other action except that now complained of. *Malone.*

[5] —— bear *my daughter.*] A similar expression occurs in *Othello:*

"What a full fortune does the thick-lips owe,
"If he can *carry* her thus!" *Steevens.*

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Our own precedent passions do instruct us
What levity 's in youth.
Tim. [*to* Luc.] Love you the maid?
Luc. Ay, my good lord, and she accepts of it.
Old Ath. If in her marriage my consent be missing,
I call the gods to witness, I will choose
Mine heir from forth the beggars of the world,
And dispossess her all.
Tim. How shall she be endow'd,
If she be mated with an equal husband?[6]
Old Ath. Three talents, on the present; in future, all.
Tim. This gentleman of mine hath serv'd me long;
To build his fortune, I will strain a little,
For 'tis a bond in men. Give him thy daughter:
What you bestow, in him I 'll counterpoise,
And make him weigh with her.
Old Ath. Most noble lord,
Pawn me to this your honour, she is his.
Tim. My hand to thee; mine honour on my promise.
Luc. Humbly I thank your lordship: Never may
That state of fortune fall into my keeping,
Which is not ow'd to you![7] [*Exeunt* Luc. *and old* Ath.
Poet. Vouchsafe my labour, and long live your lordship!
Tim. I thank you; you shall hear from me anon;
Go not away.—What have you there, my friend?

[6] *And dispossess her all.*
Tim. *How shall she be endow'd,*
If she be *mated with an equal husband?*] The players, those avowed enemies to even a common ellipsis, have here again disordered the metre by interpolation. Will a single idea of our author's have been lost, if, omitting the useless and repeated words —*she be*, we should regulate the passage thus:
How shall she be
Endow'd, if mated with an equal husband? Steevens.

[7] ——— *Never may*
That state or fortune fall into my keeping,
Which is not ow'd *to you!*] The meaning is, let me never henceforth consider any thing that I possess, but as *owed* or due to you; held for your service, and at your disposal. *Johnson.*
So Lady Macbeth says to Duncan:
"Your servants ever
"Have theirs, themselves, and what is theirs, in compt,
"To make their audit at your highness' pleasure,
"Still to return *your own.*" *Malone.*

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Pain. A piece of painting, which I do beseech
Your lordship to accept.
Tim. Painting is welcome.
The painting is almost the natural man;
For since dishonour trafficks with man's nature,
He is but outside: These pencil'd figures are
Even such as they give out.[8] I like your work;
And you shall find, I like it: wait attendance
Till you hear further from me.
Pain. The gods preserve you!
Tim. Well fare you, gentlemen: Give me your hand;
We must needs dine together.—Sir, your jewel
Hath suffer'd under praise.
Jew. What, my lord? dispraise?
Tim. A mere satiety of commendations.
If I should pay you for 't as 'tis extoll'd,
It would unclew me quite.[9]
Jew. My lord, 'tis rated
As those, which sell, would give: But you well know,
Things of like value, differing in the owners,
Are prized by their masters:[1] believe 't, dear lord,
You mend the jewel by wearing it.[2]
Tim. Well mock'd.
Mer. No, my good lord; he speaks the common tongue,
Which all men speak with him.
Tim. Look, who comes here. Will you be chid?

Enter APEMANTUS.[3]

Jew. We will bear, with your lordship.

[8] —— *pencil'd figures are*
Even such as they give out.] Pictures have no hypocrisy; they are what they profess to be. *Johnson.*

[9] —— unclew *me quite.*] To *unclew* is to *unwind* a ball of thread. To *unclew* a man, is to draw out the whole mass of his fortunes. *Johnson.*

So, in *The Two Gentlemen of Verona:*
"Therefore as you *unwind* her love from him,—
"You must provide to bottom it on me." *Steevens.*

[1] *Are prized by their masters:*] Are rated according to the esteem in which their possessor is held. *Johnson.*

[2] —— *by wearing it.*] Old copy—*by* the *wearing it.* *Steevens.*

[3] *Enter* Apemantus.] See this character of a cynick finely drawn by Lucian, in his *Auction of the Philosophers;* and how well Shakspeare has copied it. *Warburton.*

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Mer. He 'll spare none.

Tim. Good morrow to thee, gentle Apemantus!

Apem. Till I be gentle, stay for[4] thy good morrow; When thou art Timon's dog,[5] and these knaves honest.

Tim. Why dost thou call them knaves? thou know'st them not.

Apem. Are they not Athenians?[6]

Tim. Yes.

Apem. Then I repent not.

Jew. You know me, Apemantus.

Apem. Thou knowest, I do; I call'd thee by thy name.

Tim. Thou art proud, Apemantus.

Apem. Of nothing so much, as that I am not like Timon.

Tim. Whither art going?

Apem. To knock out an honest Athenian's brains.

Tim. That 's a deed thou 'lt die for.

Apem. Right, if doing nothing be death by the law.

Tim. How likest thou this picture, Apemantus?

[4] —— *stay for* —] Old copy—*stay* thou *for*. With Sir T. Hanmer I have omitted the useless *thou*, (which the compositor's eye might have caught from the following line,) because it disorders the metre. *Steevens*.

[5] *When thou art Timon's dog,*] When thou hast gotten a better character, and instead of being Timon as thou art, shalt be changed to Timon's dog, and become more worthy kindness and salutation. *Johnson*.

This is spoken δικτικῶς, as Mr. Upton says, somewhere:—striking his hand on his breast.

"Wot you who named me first the kinge's dogge?" says Aristippus in *Damon and Pythias*. *Farmer*.

Apemantus, I think, means to say, that Timon is not to receive a gentle good morrow from him till that shall happen which never will happen; till Timon is transformed to the shape of his dog, and his knavish followers become honest men. Stay for thy good morrow, says he, till I be gentle, which will happen at the same time when thou art Timon's dog, &c. i. e. never. *Malone*.

Mr. Malone has justly explained the drift of Apemantus. Such another reply occurs in *Troilus and Cressida*, where Ulysses, desirous to avoid a kiss from Cressida, says to her; give me one—

"When Helen is a maid again," &c. *Steevens*.

[6] *Are they not Athenians?*] The very imperfect state in which the ancient copy of this play has reached us, leaves a doubt whether several short speeches in the present scene were designed for verse or prose. I have therefore made no attempt at regulation. *Steevens*.

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Apem. The best, for the innocence.

Tim. Wrought he not well, that painted it?

Apem. He wrought better, that made the painter; and yet he 's but a filthy piece of work.

Pain. You are a dog.[7]

Apem. Thy mother 's of my generation; What 's she, if I be a dog?

Tim. Wilt dine with me, Apemantus?

Apem. No; I eat not lords.

Tim. An thou should'st, thou 'ldst anger ladies.

Apem. O, they eat lords; so they come by great bellies.

Tim. That 's a lascivious apprehension.

Apem. So thou apprehend'st it; Take it for thy labour.

Tim. How dost thou like this jewel, Apemantus?

Apem. Not so well as plain-dealing,[8] which will not cost a man a doit.

Tim. What dost thou think 'tis worth?

Apem. Not worth my thinking.—How now, poet?

Poet. How now, philosopher?

Apem. Thou liest.

Poet. Art not one?

Apem. Yes.

Poet. Then I lie not.

Apem. Art not a poet?

Poet. Yes.

Apem. Then thou liest: look in thy last work, where thou hast feign'd him a worthy fellow.

Poet. That 's not feign'd, he is so.

Apem. Yes, he is worthy of thee, and to pay thee for thy labour: He, that loves to be flattered, is worthy o' the flatterer. Heavens, that I were a lord!

Tim. What would'st do then, Apemantus?

Apem. Even as Apemantus does now, hate a lord with my heart.

Tim. What, thyself?

Apem. Ay.

Tim. Wherefore?

[7] Pain. *You are a dog.*] This speech, which is given to the *Painter* in the old editions, in the modern ones must have been transferred to the *Poet* by mistake: it evidently belongs to the former. *Ritson.*

[8] *Not so well as plain-dealing,*] Alluding to the proverb: "Plain dealing is a *jewel*, but they that use it die beggars." *Steevens.*

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Apem. That I had no angry wit to be a lord.[9]—Art not thou a merchant?

Mer. Ay, Apemantus.

Apem. Traffick confound thee, if the gods will not!

Mer. If traffick do it, the gods do it.

Apem. Traffick 's thy god, and thy god confound thee!

Trumpets sound. Enter a Servant.

Tim. What trumpet 's that?

Serv. 'Tis Alcibiades, and

9 *That I had* no angry *wit to be a lord.*] This reading is absurd, and unintelligible But, as I have restored the text:

That I had so hungry a wit *to be a lord,*

it is satirical enough of conscience, viz. I would hate myself, for having no more wit than to covet so insignificant a title. In the same sense, Shakspeare uses *lean-witted* in his *King Richard II:*

" And thou a lunatick, *lean-witted* fool." *Warburton.*

The meaning may be,—I should hate myself for *patiently enduring to be a lord.* This is ill enough expressed. Perhaps some happy change may set it right. I have tried, and can do nothing, yet I cannot heartily concur with Dr. Warburton. *Johnson.*

Mr. Heath reads:

That I had so wrong'd my *wit to be a lord.*

But the passage before us, is, in my opinion, irremediably corrupted. *Steevens.*

Perhaps the compositor has transposed the words, and they should be read thus:

Angry that I had no wit,—to be a lord.

Or,

Angry to be a lord,—that I had no wit. Blackstone.

Perhaps we should read:

That I had an *angry* wish *to be a lord;*

Meaning, that he would hate himself for having wished in his anger to become a lord.—For it is in anger that he says:

" Heavens, that I were a lord!" *M. Mason.*

I believe Shakspeare was thinking of the common expression—*he has wit in his anger;* and that the difficulty arises here, as in many other places, from the original editor's paying no attention to abrupt sentences. Our author, I suppose, wrote:

That I had no angry wit.—To be a lord!
Art thou, &c.

Apemantus is asked, why after having wished to be a lord, he should hate himself. He replies,—For this reason; that I *had no wit* [or discretion] *in my anger,* but was absurd enough to wish myself one of that set of men, whom I despise. He then exclaims with indignation—To be a lord!—Such is my conjecture, in which however I have not so much confidence as to depart from the mode in which this passage has been hitherto exhibited. *Malone.*

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Some twenty horse, all of companionship.[1]

Tim. Pray, entertain them; give them guide to us.—

[*Exeunt some* Attendants.

You must needs dine with me:—Go not you hence,
Till I have thank'd you; and, when dinner 's done,[2]
Show me this piece.—I am joyful of your sights.—

Enter ALCIBIADES, *with his Company.*

Most welcome, sir! [*They salute.*

Apem. So, so; there!—
Aches contract and starve your supple joints!—
That there should be small love 'mongst these sweet knaves,
And all this court'sy! The strain of man 's bred out
Into baboon and monkey.[3]

Alcib. Sir, you have sav'd my longing, and I feed
Most hungrily on your sight.

Tim. Right welcome, sir:
Ere we depart,[4] we 'll share a bounteous time
In different pleasures. Pray you, let us in.

[*Exeunt all but* APEM.

Enter Two Lords.

1 *Lord.* What time a day is 't, Apemantus?

Apem. Time to be honest.

1 *Lord.* That time serves still.

Apem. The most accursed thou,[5] that still omit'st it.

[1] —— *all of companionship.*] This expression does not mean barely that they all belong to one company, but that *they are all such as Alcibiades honours with his acquaintance, and sets on a level with himself. Steevens.*

[2] —— and, *when dinner 's done,*] *And,* which is wanting in the first folio, is supplied by the second. *Steevens.*

[3] —— *The strain of man 's bred out*
Into baboon and monkey.] Man is exhausted and degenerated; his *strain* or lineage is worn down into a monkey. *Johnson.*

[4] *Ere we* depart,] Who *depart?* Though Alcibiades was to leave Timon, Timon was not to depart. Common sense favours my emendation. *Theobald.*

Mr. Theobald proposes—*do part.* Common sense may favour it, but an acquaintance with the language of Shakspeare would not have been quite so propitious to his emendation. *Depart* and *part* have the same meaning. So, in *King John:*

" Hath willingly *departed* with a part."

i. e. hath willingly *parted* with a part of the thing in question. See Vol. VII, p. 331, n. 4. *Steevens.*

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2 *Lord.* Thou art going to lord Timon's feast.

Apem. Ay; to see meat fill knaves, and wine heat fools.

2 *Lord.* Fare thee well, fare thee well.

Apem. Thou art a fool, to bid me farewel twice.

2 *Lord.* Why, Apemantus?

Apem. Shouldst have kept one to thyself, for I mean to give thee none.

1 *Lord.* Hang thyself.

Apem. No, I will do nothing at thy bidding: make thy requests to thy friend.

2 *Lord.* Away, unpeaceable dog, or I 'll spurn thee hence.

Apem. I will fly, like a dog, the heels of the ass. [*Exit.*

1 *Lord.* He 's opposite to humanity. Come, shall we in,
And taste lord Timon's bounty? he outgoes
The very heart of kindness.

2 *Lord.* He pours it out; Plutus, the god of gold,
Is but his steward: no meed,[6] but he repays
Sevenfold above itself; no gift to him,
But breeds the giver a return exceeding
All use of quittance.[7]

1 *Lord.* The noblest mind he carries,
That ever govern'd man.

2 *Lord.* Long may he live in fortunes! Shall we in?

1 *Lord.* I 'll keep you company. [*Exeunt.*

[5] *The* most *accursed thou,*] Read:
The more *accursed thou,* ——. *Ritson.*
So, in *The Two Gentlemen of Verona:*
"The *more* degenerate and base art thou —." *Steevens.*

[6] —— *no* meed,] *Meed,* which in general signifies reward or recompense, in this place seems to mean *desert.* So, in Heywood's *Silver Age,* 1613:
"And yet thy body *meeds* a better grave."
i. e. deserves. Again, in a comedy called *Look about you,* 1600:
"Thou shalt be rich in honour, full of speed;
"Thou shalt win foes by fear, and friends by *meed.*"
See Vol. X, p, 315, n. 1. *Steevens.*

[7] *All use of quittance.*] i. e. all the customary returns made in discharge of obligations. *Warburton.*

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SCENE II.

The same. A Room of State in Timon's *House.*

Hautboys playing loud Musick. A great Banquet served in; FLAVIUS *and Others attending; then enter* TIMON, ALCIBIADES, LUCIUS, LUCULLUS, SEMPRONIUS, *and other* Athenian *Senators, with* VENTIDIUS, *and Attendants. Then comes, dropping after all,* APEMANTUS, *discontentedly.*[8]

Ven. Most honour'd Timon, 't hath pleas'd the gods remember[9]
My father's age, and call him to long peace.
He is gone happy, and has left me rich:
Then, as in grateful virtue I am bound
To your free heart, I do return those talents,
Doubled, with thanks, and service, from whose help
I deriv'd liberty.

Tim. O, by no means,
Honest Ventidius: you mistake my love;
I gave it freely ever; and there 's none
Can truly say, he gives, if he receives:
If our betters play at that game, we must not dare
To imitate them; Faults that are rich, are fair.[1]

[8] —— *discontentedly.*] The ancient stage-direction adds—*like himself. Steevens.*

[9] *Most honour'd Timon, 't hath pleas'd the gods remember* —] The old copy reads—to *remember*. But I have omitted, for the sake of metre, and in conformity to our author's practice on other occasions, the adverb—*to*. Thus, in *King Henry VIII*, Act IV, sc. ii, Vol. XI, p. 319:

" —— Patience, is that letter
" I caus'd you write, yet sent away?"

Every one must be aware that the participle—*to* was purposely left out, before the verb—*write*. *Steevens.*

[1] *If our betters play at that game, we must not dare*
To imitate them; Faults that are rich, are fair.] These two lines are absurdly given to Timon. They should be read thus:

Tim. *If our betters play at that game, we must not.*
Apem. *Dare to imitate them. Faults that are rich are fair.*

This is said satirically, and in character. It was a sober reflection in Timon; who by *our betters* meant the gods, which require to be repaid for benefits received; but it would be impiety in men to expect the same observance for the trifling good they do. Ape-

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Ven. A noble spirit.

[*They all stand ceremoniously looking on* TIM.

Tim. Nay, my lords, ceremony
Was but devis'd at first, to set a gloss
On faint deeds, hollow welcomes,
Recanting goodness, sorry ere 'tis shown;
But where there is true friendship, there needs none.
Pray, sit; more welcome are ye to my fortunes,
Than my fortunes to me. [*They sit.*

1 *Lord.* My lord, we always have confess'd it.

Apem. Ho, ho, confess'd it? hang'd it, have you not?[2]

mantus, agreeably to his character, perverts this sentiment; as if Timon had spoke of earthly grandeur and potentates, who expect largest returns for their favours; and therefore, ironically replies as above. *Warburton.*

I cannot see that these lines are more proper in any other mouth than Timon's, to whose character of generosity and condescension they are very suitable. To suppose that by *our betters* are meant the gods, is very harsh, because to imitate the gods has been hitherto reckoned the highest pitch of human virtue. The whole is a trite and obvious thought, uttered by Timon with a kind of affected modesty. If I would make any alteration, it should be only to reform the numbers thus:

Our betters play that game; we must not dare
T' imitate them: faults that are rich are fair. *Johnson.*

The faults of rich persons, and which contribute to the increase of riches, wear a plausible appearance, and as the world goes are thought fair; but they are faults notwithstanding. *Heath.*

Dr. Warburton with his usual love of innovation, transfers the last word of the first of these lines, and the whole of the second to Apemantus. Mr. Heath has justly observed that this cannot have been Shakspeare's intention, for thus Apemantus would be made to address Timon personally, who must therefore have seen and heard him; whereas it appears from a subsequent speech that Timon had not yet taken notice of him, as he salutes him with some surprize—

"O, Apemantus!—you are welcome."

The term—*our betters*, being used by the inferior classes of men when they speak of their superiors in the state, Shakspeare uses these words, with his usual laxity, to express persons of high rank and fortune. *Malone.*

So, in *King Lear*, Act III, sc. vi, Edgar says, (referring to the distracted king):

"When we *our betters* see bearing our woes,
"We scarcely think our miseries our foes." *Steevens.*

[2] —— *confess'd it? hang'd it, have you not?*] There seems to be some allusion here to a common proverbial saying of Shakspeare's time: "Confess and be hang'd." See *Othello*, Act IV, sc. i. *Malone.*

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Tim. O, Apemantus!—you are welcome.

Apem. No,

You shall not make me welcome:
I come to have thee thrust me out of doors.

Tim. Fy, thou art a churl; you have got a humour there

Does not become a man, 'tis much to blame:—
They say, my lords, that[3] *ira furor brevis est*,
But yond' man 's ever angry.[4]
Go, let him have a table by himself;
For he does neither affect company,
Nor is he fit for it, indeed.

Apem. Let me stay at thine own peril,[5] Timon;
I come to observe; I give thee warning on 't.

Tim. I take no heed of thee; thou art an Athenian; therefore welcome: I myself would have no power:[6] pr'ythee, let my meat make thee silent.

[3] *They say, my lords*, that —] *That* was inserted by Sir T. Hanmer, for the sake of metre. *Steevens.*

[4] *But yond' man 's* ever *angry.*] The old copy has—very *angry;* which can hardly be right. The emendation now adopted was made by Mr. Rowe. *Malone.*

Perhaps we should read—But yon man 's very *anger;* i. e. anger itself, which always maintains its violence. *Steevens.*

[5] ——*at thine* own peril,] The old copy reads—*at thine* apperil. I have not been able to find such a word in any Dictionary, nor is it reconcileable to etymology. I have therefore adopted an emendation made by Mr. Steevens. *Malone.*

Apperil, the reading of the old editions, may be right, though no other instance of it has been, or possibly can be produced. It is, however, in actual use in the metropolis, at this day. *Ritson.*

[6] ——*I myself would have no* power:] If this be the true reading, the sense is,—*all Athenians are welcome to share my fortune:* I would myself have no *exclusive right or* power *in this house.* Perhaps we might read,—*I myself would have no* poor. I would have every Athenian consider himself as joint possessor of my fortune. *Johnson.*

I understand Timon's meaning to be: *I myself would have no power* to make thee silent, but I wish thou would'st *let my meat make thee silent.* Timon like a polite landlord, disclaims *all power* over the meanest or most troublesome of his guests. *Tyrwhitt.*

These words refer to what follows, not to that which precedes. *I claim no extraordinary power in right of my being master of the house: I wish not by my commands to impose silence on any one: but though I myself do not enjoin you to silence, let my meat stop your mouth.* *Malone.*

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Apem. I scorn thy meat; 'twould choke me, for I should
Ne'er flatter thee.[7]—O you gods! what a number
Of men eat Timon, and he sees them not!
It grieves me, to see so many dip their meat
In one man's blood;[8] and all the madness is,
He cheers them up too.
I wonder, men dare trust themselves with men:
Methinks, they should invite them without knives;[9]
Good for their meat, and safer for their lives.
There 's much example for 't; the fellow, that
Sits next him now, parts bread with him, and pledges
The breath of him in a divided draught,
Is the readiest man to kill him: it has been prov'd.
If I
Were a huge man, I should fear to drink at meals;
Lest they should spy my windpipe's dangerous notes:[1]
Great men should drink with harness[2] on their throats.
Tim. My lord, in heart;[3] and let the health go round.

[7] *I scorn thy meat; 'twould choke me,* for *I should Ne'er flatter thee.*] The meaning is,—I could not swallow thy meat, for I could not pay for it with flattery; and what was given me with an ill will would stick in my throat. *Johnson.*

For has here perhaps the signification of *because*. So, in *Othello:*

"—— Haply, *for* I am black." *Malone.*

[8] —— *so many dip their meat*
In one man's blood;] The allusion is to a pack of hounds trained to pursuit by being gratified with the blood of an animal which they kill, and the wonder is that the animal on which they are feeding *cheers them* to the chase. *Johnson.*

[9] *Methinks, they should invite them* without knives;] It was the custom in our author's time for every guest to bring his own knife, which he occasionally whetted on a stone that hung behind the door. One of these whetstones may be seen in Parkinson's Museum. They were strangers, at that period, to the use of *forks.* *Ritson.*

[1] —— *windpipe's dangerous* notes:] The notes of the windpipe seem to be only the indications which show where the windpipe is. *Johnson.*

Shakspeare is very fond of making use of musical terms, when he is speaking of the human body, and *windpipe* and *notes* savour strongly of a quibble. *Steevens.*

[2] —— *with* harness —] i. e. armour. See Vol. VII, p, 234, n. 3. *Steevens.*

[3] *My lord, in heart;*] That is, *my lord's health with sincerity.* An emendation has been proposed thus:

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2 *Lord.* Let it flow this way, my good lord.

Apem. Flow this way!
A brave fellow!—he keeps his tides well. Timon,
Those healths[4] will make thee, and thy state, look ill.
Here 's that, which is too weak to be a sinner,"
Honest water, which ne'er left man i' the mire:
This, and my food, are equals; there 's no odds.
Feasts are too proud to give thanks to the gods.

APEMANTUS'S GRACE.

Immortal gods, I crave no pelf;
I pray for no man, but myself:
Grant I may never prove so fond,
To trust man on his oath or bond;
Or a harlot, for her weeping;
Or a dog, that seems a sleeping;
Or a keeper with my freedom;
Or my friends, if I should need 'em.
Amen. So fall to 't:
Rich men sin,[5] *and I eat root.*

[*Eats and drinks.*

My love *in heart;*——
but it is not necessary. *Johnson.*

So, in Chaucer's *Knightes Tales*, 2685:

"And was all his in chere, as his in *herte*."

Again, in Sir Amyas Poulet's letter to Sir Francis Walsingham, refusing to have any hand in the assassination of Mary Queen of Scots: "——he [Sir Drue Drury] forbeareth to make any particular answer, but subscribeth *in heart* to my opinon."

Again, in *King Henry IV*, Part I, Act IV, sc. i:

"——— *in heart* desiring still
"You may behold," &c.

Again, in *Love's Labour 's Lost*, Act V, sc. ii:

"—— Dost thou not wish *in heart*,
"The chain were longer, and the letter short?" *Steevens.*

[4] ——— *Timon*
Those healths —] This speech, except the concluding couplet, is printed as prose in the old copy; nor could it be exhibited as verse but by transferring the word *Timon*, which follows—*look ill*, to its present place. The transposition was made by Mr. Capell. The word might have been an interlineation, and so have been misplaced. Yet, after all, I suspect many of the speeches in this play, which the modern editors have exhibited in a loose kind of metre, were intended by the author as prose; in which form they appear in the old copy. *Malone.*

[5] *Rich men* sin,] Dr. Farmer proposes to read—*sing*. *Reed.*

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Much good dich thy good heart, Apemantus!

Tim. Captain Alcibiades, your heart 's in the field now.

Alcib. My heart is ever at your service, my lord.

Tim. You had rather be at a breakfast of enemies, than a dinner of friends.

Alcib. So they were bleeding-new, my lord, there 's no meat like them; I could wish my best friend at such a feast.

Apem. 'Would all those flatterers were thine enemies then; that then thou might'st kill 'em, and bid me to 'em.

1 *Lord.* Might we but have that happiness, my lord, that you would once use our hearts, whereby we might express some part of our zeals, we should think ourselves for ever perfect.[6]

Tim. O, no doubt, my good friends, but the gods themselves have provided that I shall have much help from you: How had you been my friends else? why have you that charitable title from thousands, did you not chiefly belong to my heart?[7] I have told more of you to myself, than you can with modesty speak in your own behalf; and thus far I confirm you.[8] O, you gods, think I, what need we have any friends, if we should never have need of them? they were the most needless creatures living, should we ne'er have use for them: and[9] would most

[6] ——*for ever perfect.*] That is, arrived at the perfection of happiness. *Johnson.*

So, in *Macbeth:*

"Then comes my fit again; I had else been *perfect;* —"

Steevens.

[7] *How had you been my friends else? why have you that* charitable *title from thousands, did you not chiefly belong to my heart?*] *Charitable* signifies, dear, endearing. So, Milton:

"Relations dear, and all the *charities*

"Of father, son, and brother ——."

Alms, in English, are called *charities*, and from thence we may collect that our ancestors knew well in what the virtue of almsgiving consisted; not in the *act*, but in the *disposition. Warburton.*

The meaning is probably this:—Why are you distinguished from thousands by that title of endearment, was there not a particular connection and intercourse of tenderness between you and me? *Johnson.*

[8] *I confirm you.*] I fix your characters firmly in my own mind. *Johnson.*

[9] ——*they were the most needless creatures living, should we ne'er have use for them: and* —] This passage I have restored from the old copy. *Steevens.*

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resemble sweet instruments hung up in cases, that keep their sounds to themselves. Why, I have often wished myself poorer, that I might come nearer to you. We are born to do benefits: and what better or properer can we call our own, than the riches of our friends? O, what a precious comfort 'tis, to have so many, like brothers, commanding one another's fortunes! O joy, e'en made away ere it can be born![1] Mine eyes cannot hold out water, methinks:[2] to forget their faults, I drink to you.

Apem. Thou weepest to make them drink,[3] Timon.

2 *Lord.* Joy had the like conception in our eyes,
And, at that instant, like a babe[4] sprung up.

[1] *O joy, e'en made away ere it can be born!*] Tears being the effect both of joy and grief, supplied our author with an opportunity of conceit, which he seldom fails to indulge. Timon, weeping with a kind of tender pleasure, cries out, *O joy, e'en made away*, destroyed, turned to tears, before *it can be born*, before it can be fully possessed. *Johnson.*

So, in *Romeo and Juliet:*

"These violent delights have violent ends,
"And in their triumph die."

The old copy has—*joys*. It was corrected by Mr. Rowe. *Malone.*

[2] *Mine eyes cannot hold out water, methinks:*] In the original edition the words stand thus: *Mine eyes cannot hold out water, methinks. To forget their faults I drink to you.* Perhaps the true reading is this: *Mine eyes cannot hold out; they water. Methinks, to forget their faults, I will drink to you.* Or it may be explained without any change. *Mine eyes cannot hold out water*, that is, cannot keep water from breaking in upon them. *Johnson.*

[3] —— *to make them drink,*] Sir T. Hanmer reads—*to make them drink* thee; and is followed by Dr. Warburton, I think, without sufficient reason. The covert sense of Apemantus is, *what thou loosest, they get. Johnson.*

[4] —— *like a babe* —] That is, a *weeping babe. Johnson.*

I question if Shakspeare meant the propriety of allusion to be carried quite so far. To look for *babies* in the eyes of another, is no uncommon expression. Thus, among the anonymous pieces in Lord Surrey's *Poems*, 1557:

"In eche of her two cristall eyes
"Smileth a *naked boye.*"

Again, in *Love's Mistress*, by Heywood, 1636:

"Joy'd in his looks, look'd *babies* in his eyes."

Again, in *The Christian turn'd Turk*, 1612: "She makes him sing songs to her, looks fortunes in his fists, and *babies* in his eyes."

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Apem. Ho, ho! I laugh to think that babe a bastard.

3 *Lord.* I promise you, my lord, you mov'd me much.

Apem. Much![5] [*Tucket sounded.*

Tim. What means that trump?—How now?

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Please you, my lord, there are certain ladies most desirous of admittance.

Tim. Ladies? What are their wills?

Serv. There comes with them a forerunner, my lord, which bears that office, to signify their pleasures.

Tim. I pray, let them be admitted.

Enter CUPID.

Cup. Hail to thee, worthy Timon;—and to all
That of his bounties taste!—The five best senses
Acknowledge thee their patron; and come freely
To gratulate thy plenteous bosom: The ear,
Taste, touch, smell, all pleas'd from thy table rise;[6]

Again, in Churchyard's *Tragicall Discours of a dolorous Gentlewoman*, 1593:

"Men will not *looke for babes* in hollow eyen." *Steevens.*

Does not Lucullus dwell on Timon's metaphor by referring to circumstances preceding the birth, and means joy was conceived in their eyes, and sprung up there, like the motion of a babe in the womb? *Tollet.*

The word *conception*, in the preceding line, shows, I think, that Mr. Tollet's interpretation of this passage is the true one. We have a similar imagery in *Troilus and Cressida*:

"—— and, almost like the gods,
"Does *thoughts* unveil *in their* dumb *cradles*." *Malone.*

[5] *Much!*] Apemantus means to say,—That 's extraordinary. *Much* was formerly an expression of admiration. See Vol. V, p. 116, n. 9. *Malone.*

Much! is frequently used, as here, ironically, and with some indication of contempt. *Steevens.*

[6] *The ear*, &c.] In former copies—

There *taste, touch, all pleas'd from thy table rise,*
They *only now* ——.

The *five* senses are talked of by Cupid, but three of them only are made out; and those in a very heavy unintelligible manner. It is plain therefore we should read—

Th' ear, *taste, touch,* smell, *pleas'd from thy table rise,*
These *only now*, &c.

i. e. the five senses, Timon, acknowledge thee their patron; four of them, viz. the *hearing, taste, touch,* and *smell,* are all feasted at thy board; and these ladies come with me to entertain your *sight*

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They only now come but to feast thine eyes.

Tim. They are welcome all; let them have kind admittance:—
Musick, make their welcome.[7] [*Exit* CUP.

1 *Lord.* You see, my lord, how ample you are belov'd.

Musick. *Re-enter* CUPID, *with a masque of* Ladies *as Amazons, with Lutes in their Hands, dancing, and playing.*

Apem. Hey day! what a sweep of vanity comes this way!
They dance![8] they are mad women.
Like madness is the glory of this life,
As this pomp shows to a little oil, and root.[9]

in a masque. Massinger, in his *Duke of Millaine*, copied the passage from Shakspeare; and apparently before it was thus corrupted; where, speaking of a banquet, he says—

"———— All that may be had
"To please the *eye*, the *ear*, *taste*, *touch*, or *smell*,
"Are carefully provided." *Warburton.*

Dr. Warburton and the subsequent editors omit the word—*all*; but omission is the most dangerous mode of emendation. The corrupted word—*There*, shows that—*The ear* was intended to be contracted into one syllable; and *table* also was probably used as taking up only the time of a monosyllable. *Malone.*

Perhaps the present arrangement of the foregoing words, renders monosyllabification needless. *Steevens.*

Musick, make their welcome.] Perhaps, the poet wrote:
Musick, make known *their welcome.*
So, in *Macbeth:*
"We will require her welcome,—
"*Pronounce* it for me, sir, to all our friends." *Steevens.*

[8] *They dance!*] I believe *They dance* to be a marginal note only; and perhaps we should read:
These *are mad women.* *Tyrwhitt.*

They dance! *they are* mad women.] Shakspeare seems to have borrowed this idea from the puritanical writers of his own time. Thus in Stubbes's *Anatomie of Abuses*, 8vo. 1583: "*Dauncers* thought to be *mad men.*" "And as in all feasts and pastimes dauncing is the last, so it is the extream of all other vice: And again, there were (saith Ludovicus Vives) from far countries certain men brought into our parts of the world, who when they saw men daunce, ran away marvelously affraid, crying out and thinking them to have been *mad*," &c.

Perhaps the thought originated from the following passage from *Cicero pro Murena*, 6: "Nemo enim ferè *saltat* sobrius, nisi fortè *insanit.*" *Steevens.*

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We make ourselves fools, to dispert ourselves;
And spend our flatteries, to drink those men,
Upon whose age we void it up again,
With poisonous spite, and envy. Who lives, that 's not
Depraved, or depraves? who dies, that bears
Not one spurn to their graves of their friends' gift?[1]
I should fear, those, that dance before me now,
Would one day stamp upon me: It has been done;
Men shut their doors against a setting sun.

The Lords *rise from Table, with much adoring of* TIMON; *and, to show their loves, each singles out an Amazon, and all dance, Men with Women, a lofty Strain or two to the Hautboys, and cease.*

Tim. You have done our pleasures much grace, fair ladies,[2]
Set a fair fashion on our entertainment,
Which was not half so beautiful and kind;
You have added worth unto 't, and lively lustre,[3]
And entertain'd me with mine own device;[4]
I am to thank you for it.

1 *Lady.* My lord,[5] you take us even at the best.[6]

[1] *Like madness is the glory of this life,*
As this pomp shows to a little oil, and root.] *The glory of this life is very near to madness,* as may be made appear from *this pomp,* exhibited in a place where a philosopher is feeding on *oil and roots.* When we see by example how few are the necessaries of life, we learn what madness there is in so much superfluity. *Johnson.*

The word *like* in this place does not express *resemblance,* but *equality.* Apemantus does not mean to say that the glory of this life was like madness, but it was *just as much madness* in the eye of reason, as the pomp appeared to be, when compared to the frugal repast of a philosopher. *M. Mason.*

[1] —— *of their friends' gift?*] That is, given them by their friends. *Johnson.*

[2] —— fair *ladies,*] I should wish to read, for the sake of metre —*fairest ladies. Fair,* however may be here used as a dissyllable. *Steevens.*

[3] —— lively *lustre,*] For the epithet—*lively,* we are indebted to the second folio: it is wanting in the first. *Steevens.*

[4] —— *mine own device;*] The mask appears to have been designed by Timon to surprize his guests. *Johnson.*

[5] 1 Lady. *My lord,* &c.] In the old copy this speech is given to the 1 *Lord.* I have ventured to change it to the 1 *Lady,* as Mr.

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Apem. 'Faith, for the worst is filthy; and would not hold taking,[7] I doubt me.

Tim. Ladies, there is an idle banquet
Attends you:[8] Please you to dispose yourselves.

All Lad. Most thankfully, my lord.

[*Exeunt* Cup. *and* Ladies

Tim. Flavius, ——

Flav. My lord.

Tim. The little casket bring me hither.

Flav. Yes, my lord.—More jewels yet!
There is no crossing him in his humour;[9] [*Aside.*
Else I should tell him,—Well,—i' faith, I should,
When all 's spent, he 'd be cross'd then, an he could.[1]

Edwards and Mr. Heath, as well as Dr. Johnson, concur in the emendation. *Steevens.*

The conjecture of Dr. Johnson, who observes, that *L* only was probably set down in the MS. is well founded; for that abbreviation is used in the old copy in this very scene, and in many other places. The next speech, however coarse the allusion couched under the word *taking* may be, puts the matter beyond a doubt. *Malone.*

[6] —— even *at the best.*] Perhaps we should read:
—— ever *at the best.*
So, Act III, sc. vi:
"*Ever* at the best." *Tyrwhitt.*

Take us even at the best, I believe, means, you have seen the best we can do. They are supposed to be hired dancers, and therefore there is no impropriety in such a confession. Mr. Malone's subsequent explanation, however, pleases me better than my own. *Steevens.*

I believe the meaning is, "You have conceived the fairest of us," (to use the words of Lucullus in a subsequent scene;) you have estimated us too highly, perhaps above our deserts. So, in Spenser's *Fairy Queen*, B. VI, c. ix:
"He would commend his guift, and *make the best.*"
Malone.

[7] —— *would not* hold taking,] i. e. *bear handling*, words which are employed to the same purpose in *King Henry IV*, Part II:
"A rotten case abides *no handling.*" *Steevens.*

[8] —— *there is an idle banquet*
Attends you:] So, in *Romeo and Juliet:*
"We have a *foolish trifling* supper towards." *Steevens.*

[9] *There is no crossing him in his humour;*] Read:
There is no crossing him in this *his humour.* *Ritson.*

[1] —— *he 'd be* cross'*d then, an he could.*] The poet does not mean here, that he would be *crossed* in humour, but that he would have

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'Tis pity, bounty had not eyes behind;[2]
That man might ne'er be wretched for his mind.[3]

[*Exit, and returns with the Casket.*

1 *Lord.* Where be our men?

Serv. Here, my lord, in readiness.

2 *Lord.* Our horses.

Tim. O my friends, I have one word
To say to you:—Look you, my good lord, I must
Entreat you, honour me so much, as to
Advance this jewel;[4]
Accept, and[5] wear it, kind my lord.

1 *Lord.* I am so far already in your gifts,—

All. So are we all.

Enter a Servant.

Serv. My lord, there are certain nobles of the senate
Newly alighted, and come to visit you.

his hand *crossed* with money, if he could. He is playing on the word, and alluding to our old silver penny, used before King Edward the First's time, which had a *cross* on the reverse with a crease, that it might be more easily broke into halves and quarters, half-pence and farthings. From this penny, and other pieces, was our common expression derived,—*I have not a* cross *about me;* i. e. not a piece of money. *Theobald.*

So, in *As you Like it:* "—yet I should bear no *cross*, if I did bear you; for, I think you have no money in your purse."
Steevens.

The poet certainly meant this equivoque, but one of the senses intended to be conveyed was, he will then too late wish that it were possible to undo what he had done: he will in vain lament that I did not [*cross* or] *thwart* him in his career of prodigality.
Malone.

2 —— *had not eyes behind;*] To see the miseries that are following her. *Johnson.*

Persius has a similar idea, Sat. I:

"—— *cui vivere fas est*
"Occipiti cæco." *Steevens.*

3 ——*for his mind.*] For nobleness of soul. *Johnson.*

4 ——— ——— *to*

Advance *this jewel;*] To prefer it; to raise it to honour by wearing it. *Johnson.*

5 *Accept,* and *&c.*] Thus the second folio. The first—unmetrically,—*Accept* it ——. *Steevens.*

So, the jeweller says in the preceding scene:

"Things of like value, differing in the owners,
"Are prized by their masters: believe it, dear lord,
"You *mend the jewel* by wearing it." *M. Mason.*

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Tim. They are fairly welcome.
Flav. I beseech your honour,
Vouchsafe me a word; it does concern you near.
Tim. Near? why then another time I 'll hear thee:
I pr'ythee, let us be provided[6]
To show them entertainment.
Flav. I scarce know how. [*Aside.*

Enter another Servant.

2 *Serv.* May it please your honour, the lord Lucius,
Out of his free love, hath presented to you
Four milk-white horses, trapp'd in silver.
Tim. I shall accept them fairly: let the presents

Enter a third Servant.

Be worthily entertain'd.—How now, what news?
3 *Serv.* Please you, my lord, that honourable gentleman, lord Lucullus, entreats your company to-morrow to hunt with him; and has sent your honour two brace of greyhounds.
Tim. I 'll hunt with him; And let them be receiv'd,
Not without fair reward.
Flav. [*aside*] What will this come to?
He commands us to provide, and give great gifts,
And all out of an empty coffer.[7]—
Nor will he know his purse; or yield me this,
To show him what a beggar his heart is,
Being of no power to make his wishes good;
His promises fly so beyond his state,
That what he speaks is all in debt, he owes
For every word; he is so kind, that he now
Pays interest for 't; his land 's put to their books.
Well, 'would I were gently put out of office,
Before I were forc'd out!
Happier is he that has no friend to feed,
Than such as do even enemies exceed.
I bleed inwardly for my lord. [*Exit.*

[6] *I pr'ythee, let us be provided*—] As the measure is here imperfect, we may reasonably suppose our author to have written:
I pr'ythee, let us be provided straight —.
So, in *Hamlet:*
"Make her grave *straight.*"
i. e. immediately. *Steevens.*

[7] *And all out of an empty coffer.*] Read:
And all the while *out of an empty coffer. Ritson.*

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Tim. You do yourselves
Much wrong, you bate too much of your own merits:—
Here, my lord; a trifle of our love.

2 *Lord.* With more than common thanks I will receive it.

3 *Lord.* O, he is the very soul of bounty!

Tim. And now I remember me,[8] my lord, you gave
Good words the other day of a bay courser
I rode on: it is yours, because you lik'd it.

2 *Lord.* I beseech you,[9] pardon me, my lord, in that.

Tim. You may take my word, my lord; I know, no man
Can justly praise, but what he does affect:
I weigh my friend's affection with mine own;
I 'll tell you true.[1] I 'll call on you.

All Lords. None so welcome.

Tim. I take all and your several visitations
So kind to heart, 'tis not enough to give;
Methinks, I could deal kingdoms[2] to my friends,

[8] —— *remember* me,] I have added—*me*, for the sake of measure. So, in *King Richard III:*

"I do remember *me*,—Henry the sixth
"Did prophecy ——." *Steevens.*

[9] I *beseech you*,] Old copy, unmetrically—

O, *I beseech you*, ——.

The player editors have been liberal of their tragick *O's*, to the frequent injury of our author's measure. For the same reason I have expelled this exclamation from the beginning of the next speech but one. *Steevens.*

[1] I 'll *tell you true.*] Dr. Johnson reads,—I *tell you* &c. in which he has been heedlessly followed; for though the change does not affect the sense of the passage, it is quite unnecessary, as may be proved by numerous instances in our author's dialogue. Thus, in the first line of *King Henry V:*

"My lord, *I 'll* tell you, that self bill is urg'd ——."

Again, in *King John:*

"*I 'll* tell thee, Hubert, half my power, this night —."
Steevens.

[2] —— *'tis not enough to give;*
Methinks, *I could deal kingdoms* —] Thus the passage stood in all the editions before Sir T. Hanmer's, who restored—*My thanks. Johnson.*

I have displaced the words inserted by Sir T. Hanmer. What I have already given, says Timon, is not sufficient on the occasion: Methinks I could *deal* kingdoms, i. e. could dispense them on every side with an ungrudging distribution, like that with which I could deal out cards. *Steevens.*

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And ne'er be weary.—Alcibiades,
Thou art a soldier, therefore seldom rich,
It comes in charity to thee: for all thy living
Is 'mongst the dead; and all the lands thou hast
Lie in a pitch'd field.

Alcib. Ay, defiled land,[3] my lord.

1 *Lord.* We are so virtuously bound, ——

Tim. And so
Am I to you.

2 *Lord.* So infinitely endear'd, ——

Tim. All to you.[4]—Lights, more lights.

1 *Lord.* The best of happiness,
Honour, and fortunes, keep with you, lord Timon!

Tim. Ready for his friends.[5]

[*Exeunt* ALCIB. Lords, &c.

Apem. What a coil 's here!
Serving of becks,[6] and jutting out of bums!
I doubt whether their legs[7] be worth the sums

[3] Ay, *defiled land,*] *I,*—is the old reading, which apparently depends on a very low quibble. Alcibiades is told, that *his estate lies in a* pitch'd *field.* Now *pitch,* as Falstaff says, *doth defile.* Alcibiades therefore replies, that his estate lies *in defiled land.* This, as it happened, was not understood, and all the editors published—

I defy land, ——. *Johnson.*

I being always printed in the old copy for *Ay,* the editor of the second folio made the absurd alteration mentioned by Dr. Johnson. *Malone.*

[4] *All to* you.] i. e. all good wishes, or all happiness to you. So, *Macbeth:*

"All to all." *Steevens.*

[5] *Ready for his friends.*] I suppose, for the sake of enforcing the sense, as well as restoring the measure, we should read:

Ready ever *for his friends. Steevens.*

[6] *Serving of* becks,] *Beck* means a salutation made with the head. So, Milton:

"Nods and *becks,* and wreathed smiles."

To *serve a beck,* is to offer a salutation. *Johnson.*

To *serve a beck,* means, I believe, *to pay a courtly obedience to a nod.* Thus, in *The Death of Robert Earl of Huntington,* 1601:

"And with a low *beck*
"Prevent a sharp check."

Again, in *The Play of the Four P's,* 1569:

"Then I to every soul again,
"Did give a *beck* them to retain."

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That are given for 'em. Friendship 's full of dregs:
Methinks, false hearts should never have sound legs.
Thus honest fools lay out their wealth on court'sies.

Tim. Now, Apemantus, if thou wert not sullen,
I 'd be good to thee.

Apem. No, I 'll nothing: for,
If I should be brib'd too, there would be none left
To rail upon thee; and then thou would'st sin the faster.
Thou giv'st so long, Timon, I fear me, thou
Wilt give away thyself in paper shortly:[8]
What need these feasts, pomps, and vain glories?

Tim. Nay,
An you begin to rail on society once,
I am sworn, not to give regard to you.

In *Ram-Alley, or Merry Tricks*, 1611, I find the same word:

"I had my winks, my *becks*, treads on the toe."

Again, in Heywood's *Rape of Lucrece*, 1630:

"——— wanton looks,
"And privy *becks*, savouring incontinence."

Again, in Lyly's *Woman in the Moon*, 1597:

"And he that with a *beck* controuls the heavens."

It happens then that the word *beck* has no less than four distinct significations. In Drayton's *Polyolbion*, it is enumerated among the appellations of *small streams of water*. In Shakspeare's *Antony and Cleopatra*, it has its common meaning—*a sign of invitation made by the hand*. In *Timon*, it appears to denote a *bow*, and in Lyly's play, a *nod of dignity or command*; as well as in *Marius and Sylla*, 1594:

"Yea Sylla with a *beck* could break thy neck."

Again, in the interlude of *Jacob and Esau*, 1568:

"For what, O Lord, is so possible to man's judgment
"Which thou canst not with a *beck* perform incontinent?"

Steevens.

See Surrey's *Poems*, p. 29:

"And with a *becke* full lowe he bowed at her feete."

Tyrwhitt.

[7] *I doubt whether their* legs &c.] He plays upon the word *leg*, as it signifies a *limb*, and a *bow* or *act of obeisance*. *Johnson.*

See Vol. VIII, p. 247, n. 5. *Malone.*

[8] ——— *I fear me, thou*
Wilt give away thyself in paper *shortly:*] i. e. be ruined by his securities entered into. *Warburton.*

Dr. Farmer would read—in *proper*. So, in William Roy's Satire against Wolsey:

"——— their order
"Is to have nothynge *in proper*,
"But to use all thynges in commune" &c. *Steevens.*

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Farewel; and come with better musick. [*Exit.*

Apem. So;—
Thou 'lt not hear me now,—thou shalt not then, I 'll lock[9]
Thy heaven[1] from thee. O, that men's ears should be
To counsel deaf, but not to flattery! [*Exit.*

ACT II.....SCENE I.

The same. A Room in a Senator's *House.*

Enter a Senator, *with Papers in his Hand.*

Sen. And late, five thousand to Varro; and to Isidore
He owes nine thousand; besides my former sum,
Which makes it five and twenty.—Still in motion
Of raging waste? it cannot hold; it will not.
If I want gold, steal but a beggar's dog,
And give it Timon, why, the dog coins gold:
If I would sell my horse, and buy twenty[2] more
Better than he, why, give my horse to Timon,
Ask nothing, give it him, it foals me, straight,
And able horses:[3] No porter at his gate;

[9] *Thou 'lt not hear* me *now—thou shalt not then, I 'll lock* —] The measure will be restored by the omission of an unnecessary word —*me:*

Thou 'lt not hear now,—thou shalt not then, I 'll lock —. *Steevens.*

[1] *Thy heaven* —] The pleasure of being flattered. *Johnson.*

Apemantus never intended, it any event, to flatter Timon, nor did Timon expect any flattery from him. By *his heaven* he means *good advice*, the only thing by which he could be saved. The following lines confirm this explanation. *M. Mason.*

[2] —— *twenty* —] Mr. Theobald has—*ten.* Dr. Farmer proposes to read—*twain. Reed.*

[3] *Ask nothing, give it him, it foals me, straight,*
And *able* horses:] Mr. Theobald reads:
Ten *able horses. Steevens.*

"If I want *gold* (says the Senator) let me steal a beggar's dog, and give it Timon, the dog coins me *gold.* If I would sell my *horse*, and had a mind to buy *ten* better instead of him; why, I need but give my horse to Timon, to gain this point; and it presently fetches me *an horse.*" But is that gaining the point proposed? The first folio reads:

And *able* horses:——

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But rather one that smiles, and still invites[4]
All that pass by. It cannot hold; no reason
Can found his state in safety.[5] Caphis, ho!

Which reading, joined to the reasoning of the passage, gave me the hint for this emendation. *Theobald.*

The passage which Mr. Theobald would alter, means only this: "If I give my horse to Timon, it immediately foals, and not only produces *more*, but *able* horses." The same construction occurs in *Much Ado about Nothing*: "— and men are only turned into tongue, *and trim ones too*."

Something similar occurs also in Beaumont and Fletcher's *Humorous Lieutenant*:

"—— some twenty, young and handsome,
"As also able maids, for the court service." *Steevens.*

Perhaps the letters of the word *me* were transposed at the press. Shakspeare might have written:

—— *it foals* 'em *straight*
And able horses.

If there be no corruption in the text, the word *twenty* in the preceding line, is understood here after *ne*.

We have had this sentiment differently expressed in the preceding Act:

"—— no meed but he repays
"Seven-fold above itself; no gift to him,
"But *breeds* the giver a return exceeding
"All use of quittance." *Malone.*

[4] —— *No porter at his gate;*
But rather one that smiles, and still invites —] I imagine that a line is lost here, in which the behaviour of a surly porter was described. *Johnson.*

There is no occasion to suppose the loss of a line. *Sternness* was the characteristick of a porter. There appeared at Killingworth castle, [1575] "a *porter*, tall of parson, big of lim, and *stearn of countinauns*." *Farmer.*

So also, in *A Knight's Conjuring* &c. by Decker: "You mistake, if you imagine that Plutoes *porter* is like one of those big fellowes that stand like gyants at Lordes gates &c.—yet hee 's as *surly* as those key-turners are." *Steevens.*

The word—*one*, in the second line, does not refer to porter, but means a person. He has no stern forbidding porter at his gate, to keep people out, but a person who invites them in.
M. Mason.

[5] —————— *no reason*
Can found *his state in safety.*] [Old copy—*sound.*] The supposed meaning of this must be,—*No reason*, by sounding, fathoming, or trying, *his state*, can find it *safe*. But as the words stand, they imply, that *no reason can* safely *sound his state*. I read thus:

———— *no reason*
Can found *his state in safety.*—

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Caphis, I say!

Enter CAPHIS.

Caph. Here, sir; What is your pleasure?

Sen. Get on your cloak, and haste you to lord Timon;
Impórtune him for my monies; be not ceas'd[6]
With slight denial; nor then silenc'd, when—
Commend me to your master—and the cap
Plays in the right hand, thus:—but tell him, sirrah,[7]
My uses cry to me, I must serve my turn
Out of mine own; his days and times are past,
And my reliances on his fracted dates
Have smit my credit: I love, and honour him;
But must not break my back, to heal his finger:
Immediate are my needs; and my relief
Must not be toss'd and turn'd to me in words,
But find supply immediate. Get you gone:
Put on a most importunate aspéct,
A visage of demand; for, I do fear,
When every feather sticks in his own wing,
Lord Timon will be left a naked gull,[8]
Which flashes[9] now a phœnix. Get you gone.

Reason cannot find his fortune to have any *safe* or solid *foundation*.

The types of the first printer of this play were so worn and defaced, that *f* and *ſ* are not always to be distinguished. *Johnson.*

The following passage in *Macbeth* affords countenance to Dr. Johnson's emendation:

"Whole as the marble, *founded* as the rock; ——." *Steevens.*

6 —— *be pot* ceas'd —] i. e. stopped. So, in *Claudius Tiberius Nero*, 1607:

"Why should Tiberius' liberty be *ceased?*"

Again, in *The Valiant Welchman*, 1615:

"—— pity thy people's wrongs,
"And *cease* the clamours both of old and young." *Steevens.*

7 —— *sirrah,*] was added for the sake of the metre by the editor of the second folio. *Malone.*

8 —— *a naked* gull,] A *gull* is a bird as remarkable for the poverty of its feathers, as a phœnix is supposed to be for the richness of its plumage. *Steevens.*

9 Which *flashes* &c.] *Which*, the pronoun relative, relating to *things*, is frequently used, as in this instance, by Shakspeare, instead of *who*, the pronoun relative, applied to *persons*. The use of

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Caph. I go, sir.

Sen. I go, sir?[1]—take the bonds along with you,
And have the dates in compt.[2]

Caph. I will, sir.

Sen. Go. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

The same. A Hall in Timon's *House.*

Enter FLAVIUS, *with many Bills in his Hand.*

Flav. No care, no stop! so senseless of expence,
That he will neither know how to maintain it,
Nor cease his flow of riot: Takes no account
How things go from him; nor resumes no care
Of what is to continue; Never mind
Was to be so unwise, to be so kind.[3]

the former instead of the latter is still preserved in the Lord's prayer. *Steevens.*

[1] Caph. *I go, sir.*
Sen. *I go, sir?*] This last speech is not a captious repetition of what *Caphis* said, but a further injunction to him to go. *I*, in all the old dramatick writers, stands for—*ay*, as it does in this place. *M. Mason.*

I have left Mr. M. Mason's opinion before the reader, though I do not heartily concur in it. *Steevens.*

[2] —— *take the bonds along with you,*
And have the dates in compt.] [Old copy—*And have the dates in.* Come.] Certainly, ever since bonds were given, the date was put in when the bond was entered into: and these bonds Timon had already given, and the time limited for their payment was lapsed. The Senator's charge to his servant must be to the tenour as I have amended the text; Take good notice of the dates, for the better computation of the interest due upon them. *Theobald.*

Mr. Theobald's emendation may be supported by the following instance in *Macbeth:*

"Have theirs, themselves, and what is theirs, *in compt.*"
Steevens.

[3] —— *Never mind*
Was to be so unwise, to be so kind.] Nothing can be worse, or more obscurely expressed: and all for the sake of a wretched rhyme. To make it sense and grammar, it should be supplied thus:

—— —— *Never mind*
Was [made] *to be so unwise,* [in order] *to be so kind.*

i. e. Nature, in order to make a profuse mind, never before endowed any man with so large a share of folly. *Warburton.*

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What shall be done? He will not hear, till feel:
I must be round with him, now he comes from hunting.
Fy, fy, fy, fy!

Enter CAPHIS, *and the* Servants *of* ISIDORE *and* VARRO.

Caph. Good even, Varro:[4] What,
You come for money?

Var. Serv. Is 't not your business too?

Caph. It is;—And yours too, Isidore?

Isid. Serv. It is so.

Caph. 'Would we were all discharg'd!

Var. Serv. I fear it.

Of this mode of expression, conversation affords many examples: "I was always to be blamed, whatever happened."—"I am in the lottery, but I was always to draw blanks." *Johnson.*

[4] *Good even, Varro:*] It is observable, that this *good evening* is before dinner: for Timon tells Alcibiades, that they will *go forth again, as soon as dinner 's done*, which may prove that by *dinner* our author meant not the *cæna* of ancient times, but the mid-day's repast. I do not suppose the passage corrupt: such inadvertencies neither author nor editor can escape.

There is another remark to be made. Varro and Isidore sink a few lines afterwards into the servants of Varro and Isidore. Whether servants, in our author's time, took the names of their masters, I know not. Perhaps it is a slip of negligence. *Johnson.*

In the old copy it stands, "*Enter Caphis, Isidore, and Varro.*" *Steevens.*

In like manner in the fourth scene of the next Act the servant of Lucius is called by his master's name; but our author's intention is sufficiently manifested by the stage-direction in the fourth scene of the third Act, where we find in the first folio, (p. 86, col. 2,) "*Enter Varro's* man, *meeting others.*" I have therefore always annexed *Serv.* to the name of the master. *Malone.*

Good even, or, as it is sometimes less accurately written, *Good den*, was the usual salutation from *noon*, the moment that good morrow became improper. This appears plainly from the following passage in *Romeo and Juliet*, Act II, sc. iv:

"*Nurse.* God ye good morrow, gentlemen.

"*Mercutio.* God ye *good den*, fair gentlewoman.

"*Nur.* Is it *good den?*

"*Merc.* 'Tis no less I tell you; for the.....hand of the dial is now upon the.....of *noon.*"

So, in Hamlet's greeting to Marcellus, Act I, sc. i. Sir T. Hanmer and Dr. Warburton, not being aware, I presume, of this wide sense of *Good even*, have altered it to *Good morning;* without any necessity, as from the course of the incidents, precedent and subsequent, the day may well be supposed to be turned of *noon.* *Tyrwhitt.*

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Capth. Here comes the lord.

Enter TIMON, ALCIBIADES, *and* Lords, *&c.*

Tim. So soon as dinner 's done, we 'll forth again,[5]
My Alcibiades.—With me? What 's your will?

Capth. My lord, here is a note of certain dues.

Tim. Dues? Whence are you?

Capth. Of Athens here, my lord.

Tim. Go to my steward.

Capth. Please it your lordship, he hath put me off
To the succession of new days this month:
My master is awak'd by great occasion,
To call upon his own; and humbly prays you,
That with your other noble parts you 'll suit,[6]
In giving him his right.

Tim. Mine honest friend,
I pr'ythee, but repair to me next morning.

Capth. Nay, good my lord, ——

Tim. Contain thyself, good friend.

Var. Serv. One Varro's servant, my good lord, —

Isid. Serv. From Isidore;
He humbly prays your speedy payment,[7] ——

Capth. If you did know, my lord, my master's wants, —

[5] —— *we 'll forth again,*] i. e. to hunting, from which diversion, we find by Flavius's speech, he was just returned. It may be here observed, that in our author's time it was the custom to hunt as well after dinner as before. Thus, in Laneham's *Account of the Entertainment at Kenelworth Castle*, we find, that Queen Elizabeth always, while there, hunted in the afternoon: "Monday was hot, and therefore her highness kept in 'till *five a clok* in the evening; what time it pleaz'd her to ryde forth into the chase, to hunt the hart of fors; which found anon, and after sore chased," &c. Again: "Munday the 18th of this July, the weather being hot, her highness kept the castle for coolness 'till about *five a clok*, her majesty in the chase hunted the hart (as before) of forz," &c. So, in *Tancred and Gismund*, 1592:

"He means *this evening* in the park to hunt." *Reed.*

[6] *That with your other noble parts you 'll suit,*] i. e. that you will behave on this occasion in a manner consistent with your other noble qualities. *Steevens.*

[7] *He humbly prays your speedy payment,*] As our author does not appear to have meant that the servant of Isidore should be less civil than those of the other lords, it is natural to conceive that this line, at present imperfect, originally stood thus:

He humbly prays your lordship's *speedy payment.* *Steevens.*

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Var. Serv. 'Twas due on forfeiture, my lord, six weeks,
And past,——

Isid. Serv. Your steward puts me off, my lord;
And I am sent expressly to your lordship.

Tim. Give me breath:——
I do beseech you, good my lords, keep on;
[*Exeunt* ALCIB. *and* Lords.
I 'll wait on you instantly.—Come hither, pray you.
[*To* FLAV.
How goes the world, that I am thus encounter'd
With clamorous demands of date-broke bonds,[8]
And the detention of long-since-due debts,
Against my honour?

Flav. Please you, gentlemen,
The time is unagreeable to this business:
Your importunacy cease, till after dinner;
That I may make his lordship understand
Wherefore you are not paid.

Tim. Do so, my friends:
See them well entertain'd. [*Exit* TIM.

Flav. I pray, draw near. [*Exit* FLAV.

Enter APEMANTUS *and a* Fool.[9]

Capth. Stay, stay, here comes the fool with Apemantus; let 's have some sport with 'em.

[8] ——*of* date-*broke bonds*,] The old copy has:
——*of* debt, *broken bonds*.
Mr. Malone very judiciously reads—*date-broken*. For the sake of measure, I have omitted the latter letter of the second word. So, in *Much Ado about Nothing*: "I have *broke* [i. e. broken] with her father." *Steevens*.

To the present emendation I should not have ventured to give a place in the text, but that some change is absolutely necessary, and this appears to be established beyond a doubt by a former line in the preceding scene:

"And my reliances on his *fracted dates*."

The transcriber's ear deceived him here as in many other places. Sir Thomas Hanmer and the subsequent editors evaded the difficulty by omitting the corrupted word—*debt*. *Malone*.

[9] *Enter* Apemantus *and a* Fool.] I suspect some scene to be lost, in which the entrance of the Fool, and the page that follows him, was prepared by some introductory dialogue, in which the audience was informed that they were the fool and page of Phrynia, Timandra, or some other courtezan, upon the knowledge of which depends the greater part of the ensuing jocularity. *Johnson*.

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Var. Serv. Hang him, he 'll abuse us.

Isid. Serv. A plague upon him, dog!

Var. Serv. How dost, fool?

Apem. Dost dialogue with thy shadow?

Var. Serv. I speak not to thee.

Apem. No; 'tis to thyself.—Come away. [*To the* Fool.

Isid. Serv. [*to* VAR. Serv.] There 's the fool hangs on your back already.

Apem. No, thou stand'st single, thou art not on him yet.

Caph. Where 's the fool now.

Apem. He last asked the question.—Poor rogues, and usurers' men! bawds between gold and want![1]

All Serv. What are we, Apemantus?

Apem. Asses.

All Serv. Why?

Apem. That you ask me, what you are, and do not know yourselves.—Speak to 'em, fool.

Fool. How do you, gentlemen?

All Serv. Gramercies, good fool: How does your mistress?

Fool. She 's e'en setting on water to scald such chickens as you are.[2] 'Would, we could see you at Corinth.[3]

[1] *Poor rogues, and usurers' men! bawds* &c.] This is said so abruptly, that I am inclined to think it misplaced, and would regulate the passage thus:

Caph. *Where 's the fool now?*

Apem. *He last asked the question.*

All *What are we, Apemantus?*

Apem. *Asses.*

All. *Why?*

Apem. *That you ask me what you are, and do not know yourselves. Poor rogues, and usurers' men! bawds between gold and want! Speak* &c.

Thus every word will have its proper place. It is likely that the passage transposed was forgot in the copy, and inserted in the margin, perhaps a little beside the proper place, which the transcriber wanting either skill or care to observe, wrote it where it now stands. *Johnson.*

The transposition proposed by Dr. Johnson is unnecessary. Apemantus does not address these words to any of the others, but mutters them to himself; so that they do not enter into the dialogue, or compose a part of it. *M. Mason.*

[2] *She 's e'en setting on water to* scald &c.] The old name for the disease got at Corinth was the *brenning*, and a sense of *scalding* is one of its first symptoms. *Johnson.*

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Apem. Good! gramercy.

Enter Page.

Fool. Look you, here comes my mistress' page.[4]

The same thought occurs in *The Old Law*, by Massinger:

" ——— look parboil'd,

" As if they came from Cupid's *scalding* house."

Randle Holme, in his *Academy of Arms and Blazon*, B. III, ch. ii, p. 441, has also the following passage: " He beareth Argent, a Doctor's tub (otherwise called a *Cleansing Tub*,) Sable, Hooped, Or. In this pockifyed, and such diseased persons, are for a certain time put into, not to boyl up to an heighth, but to *parboil*" &c. *Steevens.*

It was anciently the practice, and in inns perhaps still continues, to scald off the feathers of poultry, instead of plucking them. Chaucer hath referred to it in his *Romaunt of the Rose*, 6820:

" Without *scalding* they hem *pulle*." *Henley.*

[3] '*Would, we could see you at* Corinth.] A cant name for a bawdy-house, I suppose, from the dissoluteness of that ancient Greek city; of which Alexander ab Alexandro has these words: " *Et* CORINTHI *supra mille prostitutas in templo Veneris assidue degere, et inflammata libidine quæstui meretricio operam dare, et velut sacrorum ministras Deæ famulari*." Milton, in his *Apology for Smectymnuus*, says: " Or searching for me at the Bordellos, where, it may be, he has lost himself, and raps up, without pity, the sage and rheumatick old prelatess, with all her young *Corinthian* laity, to enquire for such a one." *Warburton.*

See Vol. VIII, p. 217, n. 6. *Malone.*

[4] —— *my* mistress' *page*.] In the first passage this Fool speaks of his *master*, in the second [as exhibited in the modern editions] of his *mistress*. In the old copy it is *master* in both places. It should rather, perhaps, be *mistress* in both, as it is in a following and a preceding passage:

" *All.* How does your *mistress?*"

" *Fool.* My *mistress* is one, and I am her fool." *Steevens.*

I have not hesitated to print *mistress* in both places. *Master* was frequently printed in the old copy instead of *mistress*, and *vice versa*, from the ancient mode of writing an *M* only, which stood in the MSS. of Shakspeare's time either for the one or the other; and the copyist or printer completed the word without attending to the context. This abbreviation is found in *Coriolanus*, fol. 1623, p. 21:

" Where 's Cotus? My *M.* calls for him?"

Again, more appositely, in *The Merchant of Venice*, 1623:

" What ho, M. [*Master*] Lorenzo, and M. [*Mistress*] Lorenzo."

In Vol. VI, p. 44, n. 2, and Vol. X, p. 142, n. 1, are found corruptions similar to the present, in consequence of the printer's completing the abbreviated word of the MS. improperly. *Malone.*

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Page. [*to the* Fool] Why, how now, captain? what do you in this wise company?—How dost thou, Apemantus?

Apem. 'Would I had a rod in my mouth, that I might answer thee profitably.

Page. Pr'ythee, Apemantus, read me the superscription of these letters; I know not which is which.

Apem. Canst not read?

Page. No.

Apem. There will little learning die then, that day thou art hanged. This is to lord Timon; this to Alcibiades. Go; thou wast born a bastard, and thou 'lt die a bawd.

Page. Thou hast whelped a dog; and thou shalt famish, a dog's death. Answer not, I am gone. [*Exit* Page.

Apem. Even so thou out-run'st grace. Fool, I will go with you to lord Timon's.

Fool. Will you leave me there?

Apem. If Timon stay at home.—You three serve three usurers?

All Serv. Ay; 'would they served us!

Apem. So would I,—as good a trick as ever hangman served thief.

Fool. Are you three usurers' men?

All Serv. Ay, fool.

Fool. I think, no usurer but has a fool to his servant: My mistress is one, and I am her fool. When men come to borrow of your masters, they approach sadly, and go away merry; but they enter my mistress' house[5] merrily, and go away sadly: The reason of this?

Var. Serv. I could render one.

Apem. Do it then, that we may account thee a whoremaster, and a knave; which notwithstanding, thou shalt be no less esteemed.

Var. Serv. What is a whoremaster, fool?

Fool. A fool in good clothes, and something like thee. 'Tis a spirit: sometime, it appears like a lord; sometime, like a lawyer; sometime, like a philosopher, with two stones more than his artificial one:[6] He is very often

[5] ——*my* mistress' *house*—] Here again the old copy reads—*master's*. I have corrected it for the reason already assigned. The context puts the matter beyond a doubt. Mr. Theobald, I find, had silently made the same emendation; but in subsequent editions the corrupt reading of the old copy was again restored. *Malone.*

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like a knight; and, generally in all shapes, that man goes up and down in, from fourscore to thirteen, this spirit walks in.

Var. Serv. Thou art not altogether a fool.

Fool. Nor thou altogether a wise man: as much foolery as I have, so much wit thou lackest.

Apem. That answer might have become Apemantus.

All Serv. Aside, aside; here comes lord Timon.

Re-enter TIMON *and* FLAVIUS.

Apem. Come with me, fool, come.

Fool. I do not always follow lover, elder brother, and woman; sometime, the philosopher.

[*Exeunt* APEM. *and* FOOL.

Flav. 'Pray you, walk near; I 'll speak with you anon.

[*Exeunt* Serv.

Tim. You make me marvel: Wherefore, ere this time,
Had you not fully laid my state before me;
That I might so have rated my expence,
As I had leave of means?

Flav. You would not hear me,
At many leisures I propos'd.

Tim. Go to:
Perchance, some single vantages you took,
When my indisposition put you back;
And that unaptness made you minister,[7]
Thus to excuse yourself.

Flav. O my good lord!
At many times I brought in my accounts,
Laid them before you; you would throw them off,
And say, you found them in mine honesty.

[6] —— *his artificial one:*] Meaning the celebrated philosopher's stone, which was in those times much talked of. Sir Thomas Smith was one of those who lost considerable sums in seeking of it. *Johnson.*

Sir Richard Steele was one of the last eminent men who entertained hopes of being successful in this pursuit. His laboratory was at Poplar, a village near London, and is now converted into a garden house. *Steevens.*

[7] —— *made* your *minister,*] So the original. The second folio and the later editions have all:

—— *made* you *minister.* *Johnson.*

The construction is:—*And made that unaptness your minister.* *Malone.*

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When, for some trifling present, you have bid me
Return so much,[8] I have shook my head, and wept;
Yea, 'gainst the authority of manners, pray'd you
To hold your hand more close: I did endure
Not seldom, nor no slight checks; when I have
Prompted you, in the ebb of your estate,
And your great flow of debts. My dear-lov'd lord,[9]
Though you hear now, (too late!) yet now 's a time,[1]
The greatest of your having lacks a half
To pay your present debts.

Tim. Let all my land be sold.[2]

Flav. 'Tis all engag'd, some forfeited and gone;
And what remains will hardly stop the mouth

[8] *Return* so much,] He does not mean so *great* a sum, but a certain sum, as it might happen to be. Our author frequently uses this kind of expression. See a note on the words—"with *so many* talents," in the second scene of the next act. *Malone.*

[9] —— *My* dear-*lov'd lord,*] Thus the second folio. The first omits the epithet—*dear,* and consequently vitiates the measure. *Steevens.*

[1] *Though you hear now, (too late) yet now 's a time,*] i. e. Though it be now too late to retrieve your former fortunes, yet it is not too late to prevent by the assistance of your friends, your future miseries. Had the Oxford editor understood the sense, he would not have altered the text to,—

Though you hear me now, yet now 's too late a time.
Warburton.

I think Sir Thomas Hanmer right, and have received his emendation *Johnson.*

The old reading is not properly explained by Dr. Warburton. "Though I tell you this (says Flavius) at too late a period, perhaps, for the information to be of any service to you, yet late as it is, it is necessary that you should be acquainted with it." It is evident, that the steward had very little hope of assistance from his master's friends. *Ritson.*

Though you now *at last* listen to my remonstrances, yet now your affairs are in such a state that the whole of your remaining fortune will scarce pay half your debts. You are therefore wise too late. *Malone.*

[2] The *greatest* of *your having lacks a half*
To pay your present debts.
Tim. *Let all my lands be sold*] The redundancy of measure in this passage persuades me that it stood originally thus:

Your greatest having lacks a half to pay
Your present debts.
Tim. *Let all my land be sold.* *Steevens.*

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Of present dues: the future comes apace:
What shall defend the interim? and at length
How goes our reckoning?[3]

Tim. To Lacedæmon did my land extend.

Flav. O my good lord, the world is but a word;[4]
Were it all yours to give it in a breath,
How quickly were it gone?

Tim. You tell me true.

Flav. If you suspect my husbandry, or falsehood,
Call me before the exactest auditors,
And set me on the proof. So the gods bless me,
When all our offices[5] have been oppress'd
With riotous feeders;[6] when our vaults have wept
With drunken spilth of wine; when every room

[3] —— *and at length*
How goes *our reckoning?*] This Steward talks very wildly. The Lord indeed might have asked, what a Lord seldom knows:
How goes our reckoning?
But the Steward was too well satisfied in that matter. I would read therefore:
Hold good *our reckoning? Warburton.*
It is common enough, and the commentator knows it is common to propose, interrogatively, that of which neither the speaker nor the hearer has any doubt. The present reading may therefore stand. *Johnson.*
How will you be able to subsist in the time intervening between the payment of the present demands (which your whole substance will hardly satisfy) and the claim of future dues, for which you have no fund whatsoever; and finally on the settlement of all accounts in what a wretched plight will you be? *Malone.*

[4] *O my good lord, the world is but a* word;] The meaning is, as the *world* itself may be comprised in a word, you might give it away in a breath. *Warburton.*

[5] —— *our* offices —] i. e. the apartments allotted to culinary purposes, the reception of domesticks, &c. Thus, in *Macbeth:*
"Sent forth great largess to your *offices.*"
Would Duncan have sent *largess* to any but *servants?* See Vol. VII, p. 78, n. 3. It appears that what we now call *offices*, were anciently called *houses of office.* So, in Chaucer's *Clerkes Tale*, v. 8140, Mr. Tyrwhitt's edition:
"*Houses of office* stuffed with plentee
"Ther mayst thou see of deinteous vittaile." *Steevens.*

[6] *With riotous* feeders;] *Feeders* are servants, whose low debaucheries are practised in the *offices* of a house. See a note on *Antony and Cleopatra*, Act III, sc. xi: "—one who looks on *feeders.*" *Steevens.*

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Hath blaz'd with lights, and bray'd with minstrelsy;
I have retir'd me to a wasteful cock,[7]
And set mine eyes at flow.

Tim. Pr'ythee, no more.

Flav. Heavens, have I said, the bounty of this lord!
How many prodigal bits have slaves, and peasants,
This night englutted! Who is not Timon's?[8]
What heart, head, sword, force, means, but is lord Timon's?
Great Timon, noble, worthy, royal Timon?
Ah! when the means are gone, that buy this praise,
The breath is gone whereof this praise is made:
Feast-won, fast-lost; one cloud of winter showers,
These flies are couch'd.

Tim. Come, sermon me no further:
No villainous bounty yet hath pass'd my heart;
Unwisely, not ignobly, have I given.[9]

[7] —— *a wasteful cock,*] i. e. a *cockloft*, a garret. And a *wasteful cock*, signifies a garret lying in waste, neglected, put to no use. *Hanmer.*

Sir Thomas Hanmer's explanation is received by Dr. Warburton, yet I think them both apparently mistaken. A *wasteful cock* is a *cock* or pipe with a turning stopple *running* to *waste*. In this sense, both the terms have their usual meaning; but I know not that *cock* is ever used for *cockloft*, or *wasteful* for *lying in waste*, or that lying in waste is at all a phrase. *Johnson.*

Whatever be the meaning of the present passage, it is certain, that *lying in waste* is still a very common phrase. *Farmer.*

A *wasteful cock* is what we now call a *waste pipe*; a pipe which is continually running, and thereby prevents the overflow of cisterns, and other reservoirs, by carrying off their superfluous water. This circumstance served to keep the idea of Timon's unceasing prodigality in the mind of the Steward, while its remoteness from the scenes of luxury within the house, was favourable to meditation *Collins.*

The reader will have a perfect notion of the method taken by Mr. Pope in his edition, when he is informed that, for *wasteful cock*, that editor reads—*lonely room*. *Malone.*

[8] *Who is not Timon's?*] I suppose we ought to read, for the sake of measure:

Who is not lord *Timon's?* *Steevens.*

[9] *No villainous bounty yet hath pass'd my heart;*
Unwisely, not ignobly, have I given.] Every reader must rejoice in this circumstance of comfort which presents itself to Timon, who, although beggar'd through want of prudence, consoles himself with reflection that his ruin was not brought on by the pursuit of guilty pleasures. *Steevens.*

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Why dost thou weep? Canst thou the conscience lack,
To think I shall lack friends? Secure thy heart;
If I would broach the vessels of my love,
And try the argument[1] of hearts by borrowing,
Men, and men's fortunes, could I frankly use,
As I can bid thee speak.[2]

Flav. Assurance bless your thoughts!

Tim. And, in some sort, these wants of mine are crown'd,[3]
That I account them blessings; for by these
Shall I try friends: You shall perceive, how you
Mistake my fortunes; I am wealthy in my friends.
Within there, ho![4]—Flaminius![5] Servilius!

Enter FLAMINIUS, SERVILIUS, *and other* Servants.

Serv. My lord, my lord, ——

Tim. I will despatch you severally.—You, to lord Lucius,—
To lord Lucullus you; I hunted with his

[1] *And try the* argument—] The licentiousness of our author forces us often upon far-fetched expositions. *Arguments* may mean *contents*, as the *arguments* of a book; or *evidences* and *proofs*. *Johnson.*

The matter contained in a poem or play was in our author's time commonly thus denominated. The contents of his *Rape of Lucrece*, which he certainly published himself, he calls *The Argument*. Hence undoubtedly his use of the word. If I would, says Timon, by borrowing, try of what men's hearts are *composed*, what they *have in them*, &c. The old copy reads—*argument*; not, as Dr. Johnson supposed—*arguments*. *Malone.*

So, in *Hamlet*: "Have you heard the *argument*? Is there no offence in it?" Many more instances to the same purpose might be subjoined. *Steevens.*

[2] *As* I can *bid thee speak.*] Thus the old copy; but it being clear from the overloaded measure that these words are a play-house interpolation, I would not hesitate to omit them. They are understood, though not expressed. *Steevens.*

[3] —— *crown'd,*] i. e. dignified, adorned, made respectable. So, in *King Henry VIII*:

"And yet no day without a deed to *crown* it." *Steevens.*

[4] *Within there,* ho!] *Ho*, was supplied by Sir Thomas Hanmer. The frequency of Shakspeare's use of this interjection, needs no examples. *Steevens.*

[5] —— *Flaminius!*] The old copy has—*Flavius*. The correction was made by Mr. Rowe. The error probably arose from *Fla.* only being set down in the MS. *Malone.*

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Honour to-day;—You, to Sempronius;
Commend me to their loves; and, I am proud, say,
That my occasions have found time to use them
Toward a supply of money: let the request
Be fifty talents.

Flam. As you have said, my lord.

Flav. Lord Lucius, and lord Lucullus?[6] humph!
[*Aside.*

Tim. Go you, sir, [*to another* Serv.] to the senators,[7]
(Of whom, even to the state's best health, I have
Deserv'd this hearing,) bid 'em send o' the instant
A thousand talents to me.

Flav. I have been bold,
(For that I knew it the most general way[8])
To them to use your signet, and your name;
But they do shake their heads, and I am here
No richer in return.

Tim. Is 't true? can it be?

Flav. They answer, in a joint and corporate voice,
That now they are at fall,[9] want treasure, cannot
Do what they would; are sorry—you are honourable,—
But yet they could have wish'd—they know not—but[1]
Something hath been amiss—a noble nature
May catch a wrench—would all were well—'tis pity—
And so, intending[2] other serious matters,

[6] —— lord *Lucullus?*] As the Steward is repeating the words of Timon, I have not scrupled to supply the title *lord*, which is wanting in the old copy, though necessary to the metre. *Steevens.*

[7] *Go you, sir, to the senators,*] To complete the line, we might read, as in the first scene of this play:

——— *the senators* of Athens. *Steevens.*

[8] —— *I knew it the most* general *way,*] *General* is not speedy, but *compendious*, the way to try many at a time. *Johnson.*

[9] —— *at fall,*] i. e. *at an ebb. Steevens.*

[1] —— *but* —] was supplied by Sir Thomas Hanmer, to complete the verse. *Steevens.*

[2] —— *intending* —] is *regarding, turning their notice* to other things. *Johnson.*

To *intend* and to *attend* had anciently the same meaning. So, in *The Spanish Curate* of Beaumont and Fletcher:

"Good sir, *intend* this business."

See Vol. II, p. 357, n. 4. *Steevens.*

So, in *Wits, Fits, and Fancies*, &c. 1595:

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After distasteful looks, and these hard fractions,[3]
With certain half-caps,[4] and cold-moving nods,[5]
They froze me into silence.
Tim. You gods, reward them!—
I pr'ythee, man, look cheerly: These old fellows
Have their ingratitude in them hereditary:[6]
Their blood is cak'd, 'tis cold, it seldom flows;
'Tis lack of kindly warmth, they are not kind;
And nature, as it grows again toward earth,
Is fashion'd for the journey, dull, and heavy.[7]—
Go to Ventidius,—[*to a* Serv.] 'Pr'ythee, [*to* FLAV.] be not sad,
Thou art too true, and honest; ingeniously[8] I speak,
No blame belongs to thee:—[*to* Serv.] Ventidius lately
Buried his father; by whose death, he 's stepp'd

"Tell this man that I am going to dinner to my lord maior, and that I cannot now *intend* his tittle-tattle."

Again, in Pasquil's *Night-Cap*, a poem, 1623:

"For we have many secret ways to spend,
"Which are not fit our husbands should *intend*." *Malone.*

[3] —— *and these* hard fractions,] Flavius, by *fractions*, means *broken* hints, *interrupted* sentences, *abrupt* remarks. *Johnson.*

[4] —— *half-caps*,] A *half-cap* is a *cap* slightly moved, not put off. *Johnson.*

[5] —— cold-moving *nods*,] By *cold-moving* I do not understand with Mr. Theobald, *chilling* or *cold-producing* nods, but a slight motion of the head, without any warmth or cordiality.

Cold-moving is the same as coldly-moving. So—*perpetual sober* gods, for *perpetually* sober; *lazy-pacing* clouds,—*loving-jealous*—*flattering sweet*, &c. Such distant and uncourteous salutations are properly termed *cold-moving*, as proceeding from a cold and unfriendly disposition. *Malone.*

[6] *Have their ingratitude in them* hereditary:] *Hereditary*, for by natural constitution. But some distempers of natural constitution being called *hereditary*, he calls their ingratitude so. *Warburton.*

[7] *And nature, as it grows again toward earth,*
Is fashion'd for the journey, dull, and heavy.] The same thought occurs in *The Wife for a Month*, by Beaumont and Fletcher:

"Beside, the fair soul 's old too, it grows covetous,
"Which shows all honour is departed from us,
"And we are earth again."
—— *pariterque senescere mentem.* Lucret. I. *Steevens.*

[8] —— *ingeniously*—] *Ingenious* was anciently used instead of *ingenuous*. So, in *The Taming of the Shrew*:

"A course of learning and *ingenious* studies." *Reed.*

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Into a great estate: when he was poor,
Imprison'd, and in scarcity of friends,
I clear'd him with five talents: Greet him from me;
Bid him suppose, some good necessity
Touches his friend,[9] which craves to be remember'd
With those five talents:—that had,—[*to* FLAV.] give it these fellows
To whom 'tis instant due. Ne'er speak, or think,
That Timon's fortunes 'mong his friends can sink.
Flav. I would, I could not think it;[1] That thought is bounty's foe;
Being free[2] itself, it thinks all others so. [*Exeunt.*

ACT III.....SCENE I.

The same. A Room in Lucullus's *House.*

FLAMINIUS *waiting.* *Enter a* Servant *to him.*

Serv. I have told my lord of you, he is coming down to you.

Flam. I thank you, sir.

Enter LUCULLUS.

Serv. Here 's my lord.

[9] *Bid him suppose, some* good *necessity*
Touches his friend,] *Good,* as it may afford Ventidius an opportunity of exercising his bounty, and relieving his friend, in return for his former kindness:—or, some *honest* necessity, not the consequence of a *villainous and ignoble bounty.* I rather think this latter is the meaning. *Malone.*

So afterwards:

"If his occasion were not *virtuous,*
"I should not urge it half so faithfully." *Steevens.*

[1] *I would, I could not* think it, &c.] I concur in opinion with some former editors, that the words—*think it,* should be omitted. Every reader will mentally insert them from the speech of Timon, though they are not expressed in that of Flavius. The laws of metre, in my judgment, should supersede the authority of the players, who appear in many instances to have taken a designed ellipsis for an error of omission, to the repeated injury of our author's versification. I would read:

I would, I could not: That thought's bounty's foe —. Steevens.

[2] ——*free* —] is *liberal,* not parsimonious. *Johnson.*

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Lucul. [*aside*] One of Lord Timon's men? a gift, I warrant. Why, this hits right; I dreamt of a silver bason and ewer[3] to-night. Flaminius, honest Flaminius; you are very respectively welcome, sir.[4]—Fill me some wine.—[*Exit* Serv.] And how does that honourable, complete, free-hearted gentleman of Athens, thy very bountiful good lord and master?

Flam. His health is well, sir.

Lucul. I am right glad that his health is well, sir: And what hast thou there under thy cloak, pretty Flaminius?

Flam. 'Faith, nothing but an empty box, sir; which, in my lord's behalf, I come to entreat your honour to supply; who, having great and instant occasion to use fifty talents, hath sent to your lordship to furnish him; nothing doubting your present assistance therein.

Lucul. La, la, la, la,—nothing doubting, says he? alas, good lord! a noble gentleman 'tis, if he would not keep so good a house. Many a time and often I have dined

[3] —— *a silver* bason and ewer —] These utensils of silver being much in request in Shakspeare's time, he has, as usual, not scrupled to place them in the house of an Athenian nobleman. So again, in *The Taming of the Shrew:*

" ——— my house within the city
" Is richly furnished with plate and gold;
" *Basons and ewers* to lave her dainty hands."

See Vol. VI, p. 104, n. 3. *Malone.*

Our author, I believe, has introduced *basons and ewers* where they would certainly have been found. The Romans appear to have had them; and the forms of their utensils were generally copied from those of Greece.

These utensils are not unfrequently mentioned by Homer. Thus, in Chapman's version of the twenty-fourth *Iliad:*

" This said, the chamber-maid that held the *ewre and basin* by,
" He bade powre water on his hands: —."

Again, in the fifteenth *Odyssey*, by the same translator:

" The handmaid water brought, and gave to stream
" From out a fair and golden *ewer* to them,
" From whose hands, to a silver *cauldron*, fled
" The troubled wave." *Steevens.*

[4] —— *very* respectively *welcome, sir.*] i. e. respectfully. So, in *King John:*

" 'Tis too *respective*," &c.

See Vol. VII, p. 295, n. 4. *Steevens.*

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with him, and told him on 't; and come again to supper to him, of purpose to have him spend less: and yet he would embrace no counsel, take no warning by my coming. Every man has his fault, and honesty is his;[5] I have told him on 't, but I could never get him from it.

Re-enter Servant, *with Wine.*

Serv. Please your lordship, here is the wine.

Lucul. Flaminius, I have noted thee always wise. Here 's to thee.

Flam. Your lordship speaks your pleasure.

Lucul. I have observed thee always for a towardly prompt spirit,—give thee thy due,—and one that knows what belongs to reason; and canst use the time well, if the time use thee well: good parts in thee.—Get you gone, sirrah.—[*To the* Servant, *who goes out.*]—Draw nearer, honest Flaminius. Thy lord 's a bountiful gentleman: but thou art wise; and thou knowest well enough, although thou comest to me, that this is no time to lend money; especially upon bare friendship, without security. Here 's three solidares[6] for thee; good boy, wink at me, and say, thou saw'st me not. Fare thee well.

Flam. Is 't possible, the world should so much differ;
And we alive, that liv'd?[7] Fly, damned baseness,
To him that worships thee. [*Throwing the Money away.*

Lucul. Ha! Now I see, thou art a fool, and fit for thy master. [*Exit* LUCUL.

Flam. May these add to the number that may scald thee!
Let molten coin be thy damnation,[8]

[5] *Every man has his fault, and* honesty *is his;*] *Honesty* does not here mean *probity*, but *liberality*. *M. Mason.*

[6] —— *three* solidares —] I believe this coin is from the mint of the poet. *Steevens.*

[7] *And we alive, that liv'd?*] i. e. And we who were alive then, alive now. As much as to say, *in so short a time*. *Warburton.*

[8] *Let molten coin be thy damnation,*] Perhaps the poet alludes to the punishment inflicted on M. Aquilius by Mithridates. In *The Shepherd's Calendar*, however, Lazarus declares himself to have seen in hell "a great number of wide cauldrons and kettles, full of boyling lead and ovle, with other hot metals molten, in the which were plunged and dipped the covetous men and women, for to fulfill and replenish them of their insatiate covetise."

Again, in an ancient bl. l. ballad, entitled, *The Dead Man's Song:*

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Thou disease of a friend,[9] and not himself!
Has friendship such a faint and milky heart,
It turns in less than two nights?[1] O you gods,
I feel my master's passion![2] This slave
Unto his honour,[3] has my lord's meat in him:
Why should it thrive, and turn to nutriment,
When he is turn'd to poison?
O, may diseases only work upon 't!
And, when he is sick to death,[4] let not that part of nature[5]
Which my lord paid for, be of any power
To expel sickness, but prolong his hour![6] [*Exit.*

" And ladles full of *melted gold*
" Were poured downe their throates."

Mr. M. Mason thinks that Flaminius more "probably alludes to the story of Marcus Crassus and the Parthians, who are said to have poured molten gold down his throat, as a reproach and punishment for his avarice." *Steevens.*

[9] *Thou* disease *of a friend,*] So, in *King Lear:*

" ——— my daughter;
" Or rather, a *disease*" &c. *Steevens.*

[1] *It* turns *in less than two nights?*] Alluding to the *turning* or acescence of milk. *Johnson.*

[2] —— *passion!*] i. e. suffering. So, in *Macbeth:*

" You shall offend him, and extend his *passion.*"

i. e. prolong his *suffering*. *Steevens.*

[3] *Unto his* honour,] Thus the old copy. What Flaminius seems to mean is,—This slave (to the honour of his character) has, &c. The modern editors read—Unto *this hour*, which may be right. *Steevens.*

I should have no doubt in preferring the modern reading, *unto this hour*, as it is by far the stronger expression, so probably the right one. *M. Mason.*

Mr. Ritson is of the same opinion. *Steevens.*

[4] —— *to death,*] If these words, which derange the metre were omitted, would the sentiment of Flaminius be impaired? *Steevens.*

[5] ——*of* nature —] So the common copies. Sir Thomas Hanmer reads—*nurture*. *Johnson.*

Of nature is surely the most expressive reading. Flaminius considers that nutriment which Lucullus had for a length of time received at Timon's table, as constituting a great part of his animal system. *Steevens.*

[6] —— his *hour!*] i. e. the hour of sickness. *His* for *its*. *Steevens.*

His in almost every scene of these plays is used for *its*, but here, I think, "*his* hour" relates to Lucullus, and means *his life*. If my notion be well founded, we must understand that the

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SCENE II.

The same. A publick Place.

Enter LUCIUS, *with Three* Strangers.

Luc. Who, the lord Timon? he is my very good friend, and an honourable gentleman.

1 *Stran.* We know him for no less,[7] though we are but strangers to him. But I can tell you one thing, my lord, and which I hear from common rumours; now lord Timon's happy hours are done[8] and past, and his estate shrinks from him.

Luc. Fy no, do not believe it; he cannot want for money.

2 *Stran.* But believe you this, my lord, that, not long ago, one of his men was with the lord Lucullus, to borrow so many talents;[9] nay, urged extremely for 't, and

Steward wishes that the life of Lucullus may be prolonged only for the purpose of his being miserable; that sickness may "play the torturer by small and small," and "have him nine whole years in killing."—"Live loath'd and *long!*" says Timon in a subsequent scene; and again:

"Decline to your confounding contraries,
"And yet confusion *live!*"

This indeed is nearly the meaning, if, with Mr. Steevens, we understand *his hour* to mean *the hour of sickness:* and it must be owned that a line in *Hamlet* adds support to his interpretation:

"This physick but *prolongs thy sickly days.*" *Malone.*

Mr. Malone's interpretation may receive further support from a passage in *Coriolanus*, where Menenius says to the Roman sentinel: "Be that you are, *long;* and your misery increase with your age." *Steevens.*

[7] *We know him for no less,*] That is, *we know him* by report to be *no less* than you represent him, though we are strangers to his person. *Johnson.*

To *know*, in the present, and several other instances, is used by our author for—*to acknowledge*. So, in *Coriolanus*, Act V, sc. v:

"——— You are to *know*
"That prosperously I have attempted, and
"With bloody passage led your wars—." &c. *Steevens.*

[8] —— *are* done —] i. e. consumed. See Vol. X, p. 88, n. 5. *Malone.*

[9] —— *to borrow* so many *talents;*] Such is the reading of the old copy. The modern editors read arbitrarily—*fifty talents. So many* is not an uncommon colloquial expression for an indefinite number. The Stranger might not know the exact sum. *Steevens.*

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showed what necessity belonged to 't, and yet was denied.

Luc. How?

2 *Stran.* I tell you, denied, my lord.

Luc. What a strange case was that? now, before the gods, I am ashamed on 't. Denied that honourable man? there was very little honour show'd in 't. For my own part, I must needs confess, I have received some small kindnesses from him, as money, plate, jewels, and such like trifles, nothing comparing to his; yet, had he mistook him, and sent to me,[1] I should ne'er have denied his occasion so many talents.[2]

So, Queen Elizabeth to one of her parliaments: "And for me, it shall be sufficient that a marble stone declare that a queen having reigned *such a time*, [i. e. the time that she should have reigned, whatever time that might happen to be,] lived and died a virgin."

So, Holinshed: "The bishop commanded his servant to bring him the book bound in white vellum, lying in his study, *in such* a place." We should now write in a *certain* place.

Again, in the Account-book, kept by Empson in the time of Henry the Seventh, and quoted by Bacon in his History of that king:

"*Item*, Received of *such a one* five marks, for a pardon to be procured, and if the pardon do not pass, the money to be repaid."

"He sold *so much* of his estate, when he came of age," (meaning *a certain portion* of his estate) is yet the phraseology of Scotland. *Malone.*

[1] ——*yet, had he* mistook *him, and sent to me,*] We should read: *mislook'd* him, i. e. overlooked, neglected to send to him. *Warburton.*

I rather read, *yet had he* not *mistook him, and sent to me.* *Johnson.*

Mr. Edwards proposes to read—*yet had he* missed *him.* Lucius has just declared that he had had fewer presents from Timon, than Lucullus had received, who therefore ought to have been the first to assist him. Yet, says he, had Timon *mistook him*, or overlooked that circumstance, and sent to me, I should not have denied &c. *Steevens.*

That is, "had he (Timon) mistaken himself and sent to me, I would ne'er" &c. He means to insinuate that it would have been a kind of mistake in Timon to apply to a person who had received such trifling favours from him, in preference to Lucullus, who had received much greater; but if Timon had made that mistake, he should not have denied him so many talents. *M. Mason.*

Had he mistook *him*, means, had he by mistake thought him under less obligations than me, and sent to me accordingly.

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Enter SERVILIUS.

Ser. See, by good hap, yonder 's my lord; I have sweat to see his honour.—My honoured lord,— [*To* LUC.

Luc. Servilius? you are kindly met, sir. Fare thee well:—Commend me to thy honourable-virtuous lord, my very exquisite friend.

Ser. May it please your honour, my lord hath sent——

Luc. Ha! what has he sent? I am so much endeared to that lord; he 's ever sending: How shall I thank him, thinkest thou? And what has he sent now?

Ser. He has only sent his present occasion now, my lord; requesting your lordship to supply his instant use with so many talents.[3]

Luc. I know, his Lordship is but merry with me; He cannot want fifty-five hundred talents.

Ser. But in the mean time he wants less, my lord.
If his occasion were not virtuous,[4]
I should not urge it half so faithfully.[5]

I think with Mr. Steevens that *him* relates to Timon, and that *mistook him* is a reflective participle. *Malone.*

[2] —— *denied his occasion* so many *talents.*] i. e. a certain number of talents, such a number as he might happen to want. This passage, as well as a former, (see n. 9, p. 364,) shows that the text below is not corrupt. *Malone.*

[3] —— *with* so many *talents.*] Such again is the reading with which the old copy supplies us. Probably the exact number of *talents wanted* was not expressly set down by Shakspeare. If this was the case, the player who represented the character, spoke of the first number that was uppermost in his mind; and the printer, who copied from the play-house books, put down an indefinite for the definite sum, which remained unspecified. The modern editors read again in this instance, *fifty talents.* Perhaps the Servant brought a note with him which he tendered to Lucullus. *Steevens.*

There is, I am confident, no error. I have met with this kind of phraseology in many books of Shakspeare's age. In *Julius Cæsar* we have the phrase used here. Lucilius says to his adversary:

"There is *so much*, that thou wilt kill me straight."

Malone.

[4] *If his occasion were not* virtuous,] *Virtuous* for strong, forcible, pressing. *Warburton.*

The meaning may more naturally be—If he did not want it for a good use. *Johnson.*

Dr. Johnson's explication is certainly right.—We had before:

"Some *good necessity* touches his friend." *Malone.*

[5] —— *half so* faithfully.] *Faithfully* for fervently. Therefore,

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Luc. Dost thou speak seriously, Servilius?

Ser. Upon my soul, 'tis true, sir.

Luc. What a wicked beast was I, to disfurnish myself against such a good time, when I might have shown myself honourable? how unluckily it happened, that I should purchase the day before for a little part, and undo a great deal of honour?[6]—Servilius, now before the gods, I am not able to do 't; the more beast, I say:—I was sending to use lord Timon myself, these gentlemen can witness; but I would not, for the wealth of Athens, I had done it

without more ado, the Oxford editor alters the text to *fervently*. But he might have seen, that Shakspeare used *faithfully* for fervently, as in the former part of the sentence he had used *virtuous* for forcible. *Warburton.*

Zeal or *fervour* usually attending *fidelity*. *Malone.*

[6] *That I should purchase the day before for a little* part, *and undo a great deal of honour?*] Though there is a seeming plausible antithesis in the terms, I am very well assured they are corrupt at the bottom. For a little *part* of what? *Honour* is the only substantive that follows in the sentence. How much is the antithesis improved by the sense which my emendation gives? "That I should purchase for a little *dirt*, and undo a great deal of honour!" *Theobald.*

This emendation is received, like all others, by Sir Thomas Hanmer, but neglected by Dr. Warburton. I think Theobald right in suspecting a corruption; nor is his emendation injudicious, though perhaps we may better read, *purchase the day before for a little* park. *Johnson.*

I am satisfied with the old reading, which is sufficiently in our author's manner. By purchasing what brought me but little honour, I have lost the more honourable opportunity of supplying the wants of my friend. Dr. Farmer, however, suspects a quibble between *honour* in its common acceptation, and *honour* (i. e. the *lordship* of a place) in a legal sense. See Jacob's *Dictionary*. *Steevens.*

I am neither satisfied with the amendments proposed, or with Steevens's explanation of the present reading; and have little doubt but we should read "purchase for a little *port*," instead of *part*, and the meaning will then be—"How unlucky was I to have purchased, but the day before, out of a little vanity, and by that means disabled myself from doing an honourable action." *Port* means *show*, or *magnificence*. *M. Mason.*

I believe Dr. Johnson's reading is the true one. I once suspected the phrase "purchase *for*;" but a more attentive examination of our author's works and those of his contemporaries, has shown me the folly of suspecting corruptions in the text, merely because it exhibits a different phraseology from that used at this day. *Malone.*

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now. Commend me bountifully to his good lordship; and I hope, his honour will conceive the fairest of me, because I have no power to be kind:—And tell him this from me, I count it one of my greatest afflictions, say, that I cannot pleasure such an honourable gentleman. Good Servilius, will you befriend me so far, as to use mine own words to him?

Ser. Yes, sir, I shall.

Luc. I will look you out a good turn, Servilius.—

[*Exit* SER.

True, as you said, Timon is shrunk, indeed;
And he, that's once denied, will hardly speed. [*Exit* LUC.

1 *Stran.* Do you observe this, Hostilius?[7]

2 *Stran.* Ay, too well.

1 *Stran.* Why this
Is the world's soul; and just of the same piece
Is every flatterer's spirit.[8] Who can call him
His friend, that dips in the same dish?[9] for, in

[7] *Do you observe this, Hostilius?*] I am willing to believe, for the sake of metre, that our author wrote:

Observe you this, Hostilius?

Ay, too well. *Steevens.*

[8] ——*flatterer's* spirit.] This is Dr. Warburton's emendation. The other [modern] editions read:

Why, this is the world's soul;
And just of the same piece is every flatterer's sport.

Mr. Upton has not unluckily transposed the two final words, thus:

Why, this is the world's sport;
Of the same piece is every flatterer's soul.

The passage is not so obscure as to provoke so much enquiry. *This*, says he, *is the soul* or spirit *of the world: every flatterer* plays the same game, makes *sport* with the confidence of his friend. *Johnson.*

Mr. M. Mason prefers the amendment of Dr. Warburton to the transposition of Mr. Upton. *Steevens.*

The emendation, *spirit*, belongs not to Dr. Warburton, but to Mr. Theobald. The word was frequently pronounced as one syllable, and sometimes, I think, written *sprite*. Hence the corruption was easy; whilst on the other hand it is highly improbable that two words so distant from each other as *soul* and *sport* [or *spirit*] should change places. Mr. Upton did not take the trouble to look into the old copy; but finding *soul* and *sport* the final words of two lines in Mr. Pope's and the subsequent editions, took it for granted they held the same situation in the original edition, which we see was not the case. I do not believe this speech was intended by the author for verse. *Malone.*

[9] ——*that dips in the same dish?*] This phrase is scriptural:

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My knowing, Timon has been this lord's father,
And kept his credit with his purse;
Supported his estate; nay, Timon's money
Has paid his men their wages: He ne'er drinks,
But Timon's silver treads upon his lip;
And yet, (O, see the monstrousness of man
When he looks out in an ungrateful shape!)
He does deny him in respect of his,[1]
What charitable men afford to beggars.

3 *Stran.* Religion groans at it.

1 *Stran.* For mine own part,
I never tasted Timon in my life,
Nor came any of his bounties over me,
To mark me for his friend; yet, I protest,
For his right noble mind, illustrious virtue,
And honourable carriage,
Had his necessity made use of me,
I would have put my wealth into donation,
And the best half should have return'd to him,[2]

"He that dippeth his hand with me in the dish." *St. Matthew*, xxvi, 23. *Steevens.*

[1] —— *in respect of his,*] i. e. considering Timon's claim for what he asks. *Warburton.*

In respect of his fortune: what Lucius denies to Timon is in proportion to what Lucius possesses, less than the usual alms given by good men to beggars. *Johnson.*

Does not *his* refer to the *lip of Timon?*—Though Lucius himself drink from a silver cup which was *Timon's* gift to him, he refuses to *Timon*, in return, drink from any cup. *Henley.*

[2] *I would have put my wealth into* donation,
And the best half should have return'd *to him,*] Sir Thomas Hanmer reads:

I would have put my wealth into partition,
And the best half should have attorn'd *to him,* ——.

Dr. Warburton receives *attorn'd.* The only difficulty is in the word *return'd,* which, since he had receiv'd nothing from him, cannot be used but in a very low and licentious meaning. *Johnson.*

Had his necessity made use of me, I would have put my fortune into a condition to be alienated, and the best half of what I had gained myself, or received from others, should have found its way to him. Either such licentious exposition must be allowed, or the passage remain in obscurity, as some readers may not choose to receive Sir Thomas Hanmer's emendation.

The following lines, however, in *Hamlet,* Act II, sc. ii, per-

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So much I love his heart: But, I perceive,
Men must learn now with pity to dispense:
For policy sits above conscience. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.

The same. A Room in Sempronius's *House.*

Enter SEMPRONIUS, *and a* Servant *of* Timon's.

Sem. Must he needs trouble me in 't? Humph! 'Bove all others?
He might have tried lord Lucius, or Lucullus;
And now Ventidius is wealthy too,

suades me that my explanation of—*put my wealth into donation*—is somewhat doubtful:

" *Put* your dread pleasures more *into command*
" Than to entreaty."

Again, in *Cymbeline*, Act III, sc. iv:

" And mad'st me *put into contempt* the suits
" Of princely fellows," &c.

Perhaps the stranger means to say, I would have treated my wealth as a present originally received from him, and on this occasion have returned him the half of that whole for which I supposed myself to be indebted to his bounty. Lady Macbeth has nearly the same sentiment:

" ——— in compt
" To make their audit at your highness' pleasure,
" Still to *return your own.*" *Steevens.*

The difficulty of this passage arises from the word *return'd*. Warburton proposes to read *attorn'd*; but that word always relates to persons, not to things. It is the tenant that attorns, not the lands. The meaning of this passage appears to be this:—" Though I never tasted of Timon's bounty, yet I have such an esteem for his virtue, that had he applied to me, I should have considered my wealth as proceeding from his donation, and have *returned* half of it to him again." To put his wealth into donation, means, to put it down in account as a donation, to suppose it a donation.

M. Mason.

I have no doubt that the latter very happy interpretation given by Mr. Steevens is the true one. Though (says the speaker) I never tasted Timon's bounty in my life, I would have *supposed* my whole fortune to have been a *gift* from him, &c. So, in the common phrase,—*Put* yourself [i. e. suppose yourself] in my place. The passages quoted by Mr. Steevens fully support the phrase—*into* donation.

" *Return'd* to him" necessarily includes the idea of having *come from* him, and therefore can not mean simply—*found its way*, the interpretation first given by Mr. Steevens. *Malone.*

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Whom he redeem'd from prison:[3] All these three[4]
Owe their estates unto him.

Serv. O my lord,
They have all been touch'd,[5] and found base metal; for
They have all denied him!

Sem. How! have they denied him?
Has Ventidius[6] and Lucullus denied him?
And does he send to me? Three? humph!—

I am dissatisfied with my former explanation; which arose from my inattention to a sense in which our author very frequently uses the verb—to *return*; i. e. to *reply*. Thus, in *King Richard II:*

"Northumberland, say—thus the king *returns*; ——.

Again, in *Troilus and Cressida:*

"*Returns* to chiding fortune:"

i. e. *replies* to it. Again, in *King Henry V:*

"—— The Dauphin
"*Returns* us—that his powers are not yet ready."

The sense of the passage before us therefore will be:—The best half of my wealth should have been the *reply* I would have made to Timon: I would have *answered* his requisition with the best half of what I am worth. *Steevens.*

[3] *And now Ventidius is wealthy too,*
Whom he redeem'd from prison:] This circumstance likewise occurs in the anonymous unpublished comedy of *Timon:*

"O yee ingrateful! have I freed yee
"From bonds in prison, to requite me thus,
"To trample ore mee in my misery!" *Malone.*

[4] —— *these* three —] The word *three* was inserted by Sir T. Hanmer to complete the measure; as was the exclamation *O*, for the same reason, in the following speech. *Steevens.*

[5] *They have all been* touch'd,] That is, *tried*, alluding to the *touchstone*. *Johnson.*

So, in *King Richard III:*

"O Buckingham, now do I play the *touch*,
"To try, if thou be current gold, indeed." *Steevens.*

[6] *Has Ventidius* &c.] With this mutilated and therefore rugged speech no ear accustomed to harmony can be satisfied. Sir Thomas Hanmer thus reforms the first part of it:

Have Lucius, and *Ventidius, and Lucullus,*
Denied him all? *and does he send to me?*

Yet we might better, I think, read with a later editor:

Denied him, say you? *and does he send to me?*
Three? humph!
It shows &c.

But I can only point out metrical dilapidations which I profess my inability to repair. *Steevens.*

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It shows but little love or judgment in him.
Must I be his last refuge? His friends, like physicians,
Thrive, give him over;[7] Must I take the cure upon me?
He has much disgrac'd me in 't; I am angry at him,
That might have known my place: I see no sense for 't,
But his occasions might have woo'd me first;
For, in my conscience, I was the first man
That e'er receiv'd gift from him:
And does he think so backwardly of me now,
That I 'll requite it last? No: So it may prove
An argument of laughter to the rest,
And I amongst the lords be thought a fool.[8]
I had rather than the worth of thrice the sum,
He had sent to me first, but for my mind's sake;
I had such a courage[9] to do him good. But now return,

[7] —— *His friends, like physicians,*
Thrive, *give him over;*] Sir Thomas Hanmer reads, *try'd*, plausibly enough. Instead of *three* proposed by Mr. Pope, I should read *thrice*. But perhaps the old reading is the true. *Johnson.*

Perhaps we should read—*shriv'd*. They *give him over shriv'd*; that is, *prepared for immediate death by shrift*. *Tyrwhitt.*

Perhaps the following passage in Webster's *Duchess of Malfy*, is the best comment after all:

" —— —— Physicians thus
" *With their hands full of money*, use to *give o'er*
" Their patients."

The passage will then mean:—" His friends, like physicians, thrive by his bounty and fees, and either *relinquish, and forsake him*, or give his case up as desperate." *To give over* in *The Taming of the Shrew* has no reference to the irremediable condition of a patient, but simply means to leave, to forsake, to quit:

" And therefore let me be thus bold with you
" *To give you over* at this first encounter,
" Unles you will accompany me thither." *Steevens.*

[8] *And I amongst* the *lords be thought a fool.*] [Old copy—*and 'mongst lords be thought a fool.*] The personal pronoun was inserted by the editor of the second folio. *Malone.*

I have changed the position of the personal pronoun, and added *the* for the sake of metre, which, in too many parts of this play, is incorrigible. *Steevens.*

[9] *I had such a courage* —] Such an ardour, such an eager desire. *Johnson.*

[1] *Excellent!* &c.] I suppose the former part of this speech to have been originally written in verse, as well as the latter; though the players have printed it as prose (omitting several syllables

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And with their faint reply this answer join;
Who bates mine honour, shall not know my coin. [*Exit.*

Serv. Excellent![1] Your lordship 's a goodly villain. The devil knew not what he did, when he made man politick; he crossed himself by 't: and I cannot think, but, in the end, the villainies of man will set him clear.[2] How fairly

necessary to the metre) it cannot now be restored without such additions as no editor is at liberty to insert in the text. *Steevens.*

I suspect no omission whatsoever here. *Malone.*

[2] *The devil knew* not *what he did, when he made man politick; he* crossed *himself by 't: and I cannot think, but, in the end, the villainies of man will set him* clear.] I cannot but think, that the negative *not* has intruded into this passage, and the reader will think so too, when he reads Dr. Warburton's explanation of the next words. *Johnson.*

—— *will set him clear.*] *Set him clear* does not mean acquit him before heaven; for then *the devil* must be supposed *to know what* he did; but it signifies puzzle him, outdo him at his own weapons. *Warburton.*

How the devil, or any other being, should be *set clear* by being *puzzled* and *outdone*, the commentator has not explained. When in a crowd we would have an opening made, we say, *Stand clear*, that is, *out of the way of danger*. With some affinity to this use, though not without great harshness, to *set clear*, may be to *set aside*. But I believe the original corruption is the insertion of the negative, which was obtruded by some transcriber, who supposed *crossed* to mean *thwarted*, when it meant, *exempted from evil*. The use of *crossing* by way of protection or purification, was probably not worn out in Shakspeare's time. The sense of *set clear* is now easy; he has no longer the guilt of tempting man. To *cross himself* may mean, in a very familiar sense, *to clear his score, to get out of debt, to quit his reckoning*. He knew not *what he did*, may mean, he knew not how much good he was doing himself. There is no need of emendation. *Johnson.*

Perhaps Dr. Warburton's explanation is the true one. *Clear* is an adverb, or so used; and Dr. Johnson's Dictionary observes, that *to set* means, in Addison, to embarrass, to distress, to perplex.—If then the devil made men politick, he has thwarted his own interest, because the superior cunning of man will at last puzzle him, or be above the reach of his temptations. *Tollet.*

Johnson's explanation of this passage is nearly right; but I don't see how the insertion of the negative injures the sense, or why that should be considered as a corruption. Servilius means to say, that the devil did not foresee the advantage that would arise to himself from thence, when he made men politick He redeemed himself by it; for men will, in the end, become so much more villainous than he is, that they will set him clear; he will appear innocent when compared to them. Johnson has rightly ex-

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this lord strives to appear foul? takes virtuous copies to be wicked; like those that, under hot ardent zeal, would set whole realms on fire.[3]
Of such a nature is his politick love.

plained the words, "he crossed himself by it."—So, in *Cymbeline*, Posthumous says of himself—

"——— It is I
"That all the abhorred things o' the earth *amend*,
"By being worse than they." *M. Mason.*

The meaning, I think, is this: *The devil did not know what he was about*, [how much his reputation for wickedness would be diminished] *when he made man crafty and interested; he thwarted himself by it;* [by thus raising up rivals to contend with him in iniquity, and at length to surpass him;] *and I cannot but think that at last the enormities of mankind will rise to such a height, as to make even Satan himself*, in *comparison, appear* (what he would least of all wish to be) *spotless and innocent.*

Clear is in many other places used by our author and the contemporary writers, for *innocent*. So, in *The Tempest:*

"——nothing but heart's sorrow,
"And a *clear* life ensuing."

Again, in *Macbeth:*

"——— This Duncan
"Hath borne his faculties so meek, hath been
"So *clear* in his great office, —."

Again, in the play before us:

"Roots, ye *clear* gods!"

Again, in Marlowe's *Lust's Dominion*, 1657:

"——— I know myself am *clear*
"As is the new-born infant." *Malone.*

The devil's folly in making man politick, is to appear in this, that he will, at the long run be too many for his old master, and get free of his bonds. The villainies of man are to set himself clear, not the devil, to whom he is supposed to be in thraldom. *Ritson.*

Concerning this difficult passage, I claim no other merit than that of having left before the reader the notes of all the commentators. I myself am in the state of Dr. Warburton's devil,—*puzzled*, instead of being *set clear* by them. *Steevens.*

[3] ——*takes* virtuous copies *to be wicked; like those* &c.] This is a reflection on the puritans of that time. These people were then set upon the project of new-modelling the ecclesiastical and civil government according to scripture rules and examples; which makes him say, that *under zeal* for the word of God, they *would set whole realms on fire*. So, Sempronius pretended to that warm affection and generous jealousy of friendship, that is affronted, if any other be applied to before it. At best the similitude is an aukward one; but it fitted the *audience*, though not the *speaker*. *Warburton.*

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This was my lord's best hope; now all are fled,
Save the gods only:[4] Now his friends are dead,
Doors, that were ne'er acquainted with their wards
Many a bounteous year, must be employ'd
Now to guard sure their master.
And this is all a liberal course allows;
Who cannot keep his wealth, must keep his house.[5]
[*Exit.*

SCENE IV.

The same. A Hall in Timon's *House.*

Enter Two Servants of Varro, *and the Servant of* Lucius, *meeting* Titus, Hortensius, *and other Servants to* Timon's *Creditors, waiting his coming out.*

Var. Serv. Well met; good-morrow, Titus and Hortensius.
Tit. The like to you, kind Varro.
Hor. Lucius?
What, do we meet together?
Luc. Serv. Ay, and, I think,
One business does command us all; for mine
Is money.
Tit. So is theirs and ours.

Enter Philotus.

Luc. Serv. And sir
Philotus too!
Phi. Good day at once.
Luc. Serv. Welcome, good brother.
What do you think the hour?
Phi. Labouring for nine.
Luc. Serv. So much?
Phi. Is not my lord seen yet?
Luc. Serv. Not yet.
Phi. I wonder on 't; he was wont to shine at seven.
Luc. Serv. Ay, but the days are waxed shorter with him:

[4] *Save the gods only:*] Old copy—*Save only the gods.* The transposition is Sir Thomas Hanmer's. *Steevens.*

[5] —— *keep his house.*] i. e. keep within doors for fear of duns. *Johnson.*
So, in *Measure for Measure*, Act III, sc. ii: "You will turn good husband now, Pompey; you will *keep the house.*" *Steevens.*

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You must consider, that a prodigal course
Is like the sun's;[6] but not, like his, recoverable.
I fear,
'Tis deepest winter in lord Timon's purse;
That is, one may reach deep enough, and yet
Find little.[7]

Phi. I am of your fear for that.

Tit. I 'll show you how to observe a strange event.
Your lord sends now for money.

Hor. Most true, he does.

Tit. And he wears jewels now of Timon's gift,
For which I wait for money.

Hor. It is against my heart.

Luc. Serv. Mark, how strange it shows,
Timon in this should pay more than he owes:
And e'en as if your lord should wear rich jewels,
And send for money for 'em.

Hor. I am weary of this charge,[8] the gods can witness:
I know, my lord hath spent of Timon's wealth,
And now ingratitude makes it worse than stealth.

1 *Var. Serv.* Yes, mine 's three thousand crowns: What 's yours?

Luc. Serv. Five thousand mine.

1 *Var. Serv.* 'Tis much deep: and it should seem by the sum,
Your master's confidence was above mine;
Else, surely, his had equall'd.[9]

[6] ——— *a prodigal course*
Is like the sun's;] That is, like him in blaze and splendor.
Soles occidere & redire possunt. Catull. *Johnson.*
Theobald, and the subsequent editors, elegantly enough, but without necessity, read—a *prodigal's* course. We have the same phrase as that in the text in the last couplet of the preceding scene:
"And this is all a *liberal course* allows." *Malone.*

[7] —— *reach deep enough, and yet*
Find little.] Still, perhaps, alluding to the effects of winter, during which some animals are obliged to seek their scanty provision through a depth of snow. *Steevens.*

[8] *I am weary of this charge,*] That is, of this *commission*, of this *employment*. *Johnson.*

[9] *Else, surely,* his *had equall'd.*] Should it not be, *Else, surely,* mine *had equall'd*. *Johnson.*

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Enter FLAMINIUS.

Tit. One of lord Timon's men.

Luc. Serv. Flaminius! sir, a word: 'Pray, is my lord ready to come forth?

The meaning of the passage is evidently and simply this: *Your master, it seems, had more confidence in lord Timon than mine, otherwise his* (i. e. my master's) *debt* (i. e. the money due to him from Timon) *would certainly have been as great as your master's* (i. e. as the money which Timon owes to your master;) that is, my master being as rich as yours, could and would have advanced Timon as large a sum as your master has advanced him, if he, (my master) had thought it prudent to do so. *Ritson.*

The meaning may be, "The confidential friendship subsisting between your master [Lucius] and Timon, was greater than that subsisting between my master [Varro] and Timon; else surely the sum borrowed by Timon from your master had been *equal* to, and *not greater* than, the sum borrowed from mine; and this *equality* would have been produced by the application made to my master being *raised* from *three* thousand crowns to *five* thousand."

Two sums of unequal magnitude may be reduced to an equality, as well by addition to the lesser sum, as by subtraction from the greater. Thus, if A has applied to B for ten pounds, and to C for five, and C requests that he may lend A precisely the *same* sum as he shall be furnished with by B, this may be done, either by C's *augmenting* his loan, and lending ten pounds as well as B, or by B's *diminishing* his loan, and, like C, lending only five pounds. The words of Varro's servant therefore may mean, Else surely the *same sums* had been borrowed by Timon from both our masters.

I have preserved this interpretation, because I once thought it *probable*; and because it may strike others as *just*. But the true explication I believe is this (which I also formerly proposed). *His* may refer to *mine*. "It should seem that the confidential friendship subsisting between your master and Timon, was greater than that subsisting between Timon and my master; else surely *his* sum, i. e. the sum borrowed from *my* master, [the last antecedent] had been as large as the sum borrowed from yours."

The former interpretation (though I think it wrong,) I have stated thus precisely, and exactly in *substance* as it appeared several years ago, (though the expression is a little varied,) because a REMARKER [Mr. Ritson] has endeavoured to represent it as unintelligible.

This *Remarker*, however, it is observable, after saying, that he shall take no notice of *such see-saw conjectures*, with great gravity proposes a comment evidently formed on the latter of them, as an original interpretation of *his own*, on which the reader may *safely* rely. *Malone.*

It must be perfectly clear, that the *Remarker* could not be in-

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Flam. No, indeed, he is not.

Tit. We attend his lordship; 'pray, signify so much.

Flam. I need not tell him that; he knows, you are too diligent. [*Exit* FLAM.

Enter FLAVIUS *in a Cloak, muffled.*

Luc. Serv. Ha! is not that his steward muffled so? He goes away in a cloud: call him, call him.

Tit. Do you hear, sir?

1 *Var. Serv.* By your leave, sir, ——

Flav. What do you ask of me, my friend?

Tit. We wait for certain money here, sir.

Flav. Ay,
If money were as certain as your waiting,
'Twere sure enough. Why then preferr'd you not
Your sums and bills, when your false masters eat
Of my lord's meat? Then they could smile, and fawn
Upon his debts, and take down th' interest
Into their gluttonous maws. You do yourselves but wrong,
To stir me up; let me pass quietly:
Believe 't, my lord and I have made an end;
I have no more to reckon, he to spend.

Luc. Serv. Ay, but this answer will not serve.

Flav. If 'twill not,[1]
'Tis not so base as you; for you serve knaves. [*Exit.*

1 *Var. Serv.* How! what does his cashier'd worship mutter?

2 *Var. Serv.* No matter what; he 's poor, and that 's revenge enough. Who can speak broader than he that has no house to put his head in? such may rail against great buildings.

Enter SERVILIUS.[2]

Tit. O, here 's Servilius; now we shall know
Some answer.

debted to a note which, so far as it is intelligible, seems diametrically opposite to his idea. It is equally so, that the editor [Mr. Malone] has availed himself of the above Remark, to vary the expression of his conjecture, and gave it a sense it would otherwise never have had. *Ritson.*

[1] *If 'twill not,*] Old copy—if 'twill not *serve.* I have ventured to omit the useless repetition of the verb—*serve,* because it injures the metre. *Steevens.*

[2] *Enter* Servilius.] It may be observed that Shakspeare has unskilfully filled his Greek story with Roman names. *Johnson.*

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Ser. If I might beseech you, gentlemen,
To repair some other hour, I should much
Derive from it:[3] for, take it on my soul,
My lord leans wond'rously to discontent.
His comfortable temper has forsook him;
He is much out of health, and keeps his chamber.

Luc. Serv. Many do keep their chambers, are not sick:
And, if it be so far beyond his health,
Methinks, he should the sooner pay his debts,
And make a clear way to the gods.

Ser. Good gods!

Tit. We cannot take this for an answer,[4] sir.

Flam. [*within*] Servilius, help!—my lord! my lord!—

Enter TIMON, *in a rage;* FLAMINIUS *following.*

Tim. What, are my doors oppos'd against my passage?
Have I been ever free, and must my house
Be my retentive enemy, my gaol?
The place, which I have feasted, does it now,
Like all mankind, show me an iron heart?

Luc. Serv. Put in now, Titus.

Tit. My lord, here is my bill.

Luc. Serv. Here 's mine.

Hor. Serv. And mine, my lord,[5]

Both Var. Serv. And ours, my lord.

[3] ——— *I should much*
Derive from it: &c.] Old copy:
——— *I should*
Derive much from it: &c.
For this slight transposition, by which the metre is restored, I am answerable. *Steevens.*

[4] —— *for* an *answer,*] The article *an,* which is deficient in the old copy, was supplied by Sir Thomas Hanmer. *Steevens.*

[5] Hor. Serv. *And mine, my lord.*] In the old copy this speech is given to *Varro.* I have given it to the servant of *Hortensius,* (who would naturally prefer his claim among the rest,) because to the following speech in the old copy is prefixed, 2 *Var.* which from the words spoken [And *ours,* my lord.] meant, I conceive, *the two servants of Varro.* In the modern editions this latter speech is given to Caphis, who is not upon the stage. *Malone.*

This whole scene perhaps was strictly metrical, when it came from Shakspeare; but the present state of it is such, that it cannot be restored but by greater violence than an editor may be allowed to employ. I have therefore given it without the least attempt at arrangement. *Steevens.*

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Phi. All our bills.
Tim. Knock me down with 'em:[6] cleave me to the girdle.
Luc. Serv. Alas! my lord,——
Tim. Cut my heart in sums.
Tit. Mine, fifty talents.
Tim. Tell out my blood.
Luc. Serv. Five thousand crowns, my lord.
Tim. Five thousand drops pays that.—
What yours?—and yours?
1 *Var. Serv.* My lord,——
2 *Var. Serv.* My lord,——
Tim. Tear me, take me, and the gods fall on you!
[*Exit.*

Hor. 'Faith, I perceive, our masters may throw their caps at their money; these debts may well be called desperate ones, for a madman owes 'em. [*Exeunt.*

Re-enter TIMON *and* FLAVIUS.

Tim. They have c'en put my breath from me, the slaves:
Creditors!—devils.
Flav. My dear lord,——
Tim. What if it should be so?
Flav. My lord,——
Tim. I 'll have it so:—My steward!
Flav. Here, my lord.
Tim. So fitly? Go, bid all my friends again,
Lucius, Lucullus, and Sempronius; all:
I 'll once more feast the rascals.[7]

[6] *Knock me down with 'em.*] Timon quibbles. They present their written *bills;* he catches at the word, and alludes to the *bills* or battle-axes, which the ancient soldiery carried, and were still used by the watch in Shakspeare's time. See the scene between Dogberry, &c. in *Much Ado about Nothing*, Vol. IV, p. 244, n. 4. Again, in Heywood's *If you know not me you know Nobody*, 1633, Second Part, Sir John Gresham says to his creditors: "Friends, you cannot beat me down with *your bills*." Again, in Decker's *Guls Hornbook*, 1609: "—they durst not *strike down* their customers with large *bills*." *Steevens.*

[7] *So fitly? Go, bid all my friends again,*
Lucius, Lucullus, and Sempronius; all:
I'll once more feast the rascals.] Thus the second folio; except that, by an apparent error of the press, we have—*add* instead of *and*.

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Flav. O my lord,
You only speak from your distracted soul;
There is not so much left, to furnish out
A moderate table.
Tim. Be 't not in thy care; go,
I charge thee; invite them all: let in the tide
Of knaves once more; my cook and I 'll provide.
[*Exeunt.*

SCENE V.

The same. The Senate-House.

The Senate sitting. Enter ALCIBIADES, *attended.*

1 *Sen.* My lord, you have my voice to it; the fault 's
Bloody; 'tis necessary he should die:
Nothing emboldens sin so much as mercy.
2 *Sen.* Most true; the law shall bruise him.[8]
Alcib. Honour, health, and compassion to the senate!

The first folio reads:

Lucius, Lucullus, and Sempronius Vllorxa: *all,*
I 'll once more feast the rascals.

Regularity of metre alone would be sufficient to decide in favour of the present text, which, with the second folio, rejects the fortuitous and unmeaning aggregate of letters—*Ullorxa.* This *Ullorxa,* however, seems to have been considered as one of the "inestimable stones, unvalued jewels," which "emblaze the forehead" of that august publication, the folio, 1623; and has been set, with becoming care, in the text of Mr. Malone. For my own part, like the cock in the fable, I am content to leave this gem on the stercoraceous spot where it was discovered.—*Ullorxa* (a name unacknowledged by Athens or Rome) must (if meant to have been introduced at all) have been a corruption as gross as others that occur in the same book, where we find *Billingsgate* instead of *Basing-stoke; Epton* instead of *Hyperion;* and an *ace* instead of *Até.* Types, indeed, shook out of a hat, or shot from a dice-box, would often assume forms as legitimate as the proper names transmitted to us by Messieurs Hemings, Condell and Co. who very probably did not accustom themselves to spell even their own appellations with accuracy, or always in the same manner. *Steevens.*

[8] ——*shall bruise* him.] The old copy reads—shall bruise *'em.* The same mistake has happened often in these plays. In a subsequent line in this scene we have in the old copy—with *him,* instead of—with *'em.* For the correction, which is fully justified by the context, I am answerable. *Malone.*

Sir Thomas Hanmer also reads—bruise *him.* *Steevens.*

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1 *Sen.* Now, captain?

Alcib. I am an humble suitor to your virtues;
For pity is the virtue of the law,
And none but tyrants use it cruelly.
It pleases time, and fortune, to lie heavy
Upon a friend of mine, who, in hot blood,
Hath stepp'd into the law, which is past depth
To those that, without heed, do plunge into it.
He is a man, setting his fate aside,[9]
Of comely virtues:[1]
Nor did he soil the fact with cowardice;
(An honour in him, which buys out his fault,)
But, with a noble fury, and fair spirit,
Seeing his reputation touch'd to death,
He did oppose his foe:
And with such sober and unnoted passion
reprove He did behave his anger, ere 'twas spent,[2]
moved As if he had but prov'd an argument.

[9] —— *setting his* fate *aside,*] i. e. putting this action of his, which was pre-determined by fate, out of the question. *Steevens.*

[1] *He is a man,* &c.] I have printed these lines after the original copy, except that, for *an honour,* it is there, *and honour.* All the latter editions deviate unwarrantably from the original, and give the lines thus:

He is a man, setting his fault *aside,*
Of virtuous honour, which buys out his fault;
Nor did he soil &c. *Johnson.*

This licentious alteration of the text, with a thousand others of the same kind, was made by Mr. Pope. *Malone.*

[2] *And with such sober and* unnoted *passion*
He did behave *his anger, ere 'twas spent,* &c.] *Unnoted* for common, bounded. *Behave,* for curb, manage. *Warburton.*

I would rather read:

——— *and unnoted passion*
He did behave, ere was his anger spent.

Unnoted passion means, I believe, an uncommon command of his passion, such a one as has not hitherto been observed. *Behave his anger* may, however, be right. In Sir W. D'Avenant's play of *The Just Italian,* 1630, *behave* is used in as singular a manner:

"How well my stars *behave* their influence."

Again:

"——— You an Italian, sir, and thus
"*Behave* the knowledge of disgrace!"

In both these instances, to *behave* is to *manage.* *Steevens.*

"Unnoted passion," I believe, means a passion operating inwardly, but not accompanied with any external or boisterous ap-

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1 *Sen.* You undergo too strict a paradox,[3]
Striving to make an ugly deed look fair:
Your words have took such pains, as if they labour'd
To bring manslaughter into form, set quarrelling
Upon the head of valour; which, indeed,
Is valour misbegot, and came into the world
When sects and factions were newly born:
He 's truly valiant, that can wisely suffer
The worst that man can breathe;[4] and make his wrongs
His outsides; wear them like his raiment, carelessly;

pearances; so regulated and subdued, that no spectator could *note*, or observe, its operation.

The old copy reads—He did *behoove* &c. which does not afford any very clear meaning. *Behave*, which Dr. Warburton interprets, *manage*, was introduced by Mr. Rowe. I doubt the text is not yet right. Our author so very frequently converts nouns into verbs, that I have sometimes thought he might have written—"He did *behalve* his anger,"—i. e. suppress it. So, Milton:

"—— yet put he not forth all his strength,
"But check'd it *mid-way*."

Behave, however, is used by Spenser, in his *Fairy Queen*, B. I, c. iii, in a sense that will suit sufficiently with the passage before us:

"But who his limbs with labours, and his *mind*
"*Behaves* with cares, cannot so easy miss"

To *behave* certainly had formerly a very different signification from that in which it is now used. Cole, in his *Dictionary*, 1679, renders it by *tracto*, which he interprets to *govern*, or *manage*.
Malone.

On second consideration, the sense of this passage, (however perversely expressed on account of rhyme,) may be this: "He managed his anger with such sober and unnoted *passion* [i. e. *suffering*, forbearance,] before *it* was spent, [i. e. before that disposition to endure the insult he had received, was exhausted,] that it seemed as if he had been only engaged in supporting an argument he had advanced in conversation. *Passion* may as well be used to signify *suffering*, as any *violent commotion of the mind:* and that our author was aware of this, may be inferred from his introduction of the Latin phrase—"*hysterica passio*," in *King Lear*. See also Vol. XIV, p. 11, n. 7. *Steevens.*

[3] *You undergo too* strict *a paradox*,] You undertake a paradox too *hard*. *Johnson.*

[4] —— *that man can* breathe;] i. e. can *utter*. So afterwards:
"You *breathe* in vain." *Malone.*
Again, in *Hamlet:*
"Having ever seen, in the prenominate crimes,
"The youth you *breathe* of, guilty." *Steevens.*

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And ne'er prefer his injuries to his heart,
To bring it into danger.
If wrongs be evils, and enforce us kill,
What folly 'tis, to hazard life for ill?

Alcib. My lord,——

1 *Sen.* You cannot make gross sins look clear;
To revenge is no valour, but to bear.

Alcib. My lords, then, under favour, pardon me,
If I speak like a captain.—
Why do fond men expose themselves to battle,
And not endure all threatnings?[5] sleep upon it,
And let the foes quietly cut their throats,
Without repugnancy? but if there be
Such valour in the bearing, what make we
Abroad?[6] why then, women are more valiant,
That stay at home, if bearing carry it;
And th' ass, more captain than the lion; the felon,[7]

5 —— *threat*nings?] Old copy—*threats*. This slight, but judicious change, is Sir Thomas Hanmer's. In the next line but one, he also added, for the sake of metre,—*but* —. *Steevens.*

6 ——— ——— *what* make we
Abroad?] *What do we,* or *what have we to do in the field.* *Johnson.*

7 *And th' ass,* more captain *than the lion;* &c.] Here is another arbitrary regulation, [the omission of—*captain*] the original reads thus:

——— ——— *what make we*
Abroad? why then, women are more valiant
That stay at home, if bearing carry it:
And the ass, more captain than the lion,
The fellow, *loaden with irons, wiser than the judge,*
If wisdom &c.

I think it may be better adjusted thus:

——— ——— *what make we*
Abroad? why then the *women are more valiant*
That stay at home;
If bearing carry it, then is *the ass*
More captain than the lion; and the felon
Loaden with irons, wiser &c. *Johnson.*

—— *if* bearing *carry it;*] Dr. Johnson, when he proposed to connect this hemistich with the following line instead of the preceding words, seems to have forgot one of our author's favourite propensities. I have no doubt that the present arrangement is right.

Mr. Pope, who rejected whatever he did not like, omitted the words—*more captain.* They are supported by what Alcibiades has already said:

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Loaden with irons, wiser than the judge,
If wisdom be in suffering. O my lords,
As you are great, be pitifully good:
Who cannot condemn rashness in cold blood?
To kill, I grant, is sin's extremest gust;[8]
But, in defence, by mercy, 'tis most just.[9]
To be in anger, is impiety;
But who is man, that is not angry?

"My lords, then, under favour, pardon me,
"If I speak like a *captain* ——."
and by Shakspeare's 66th Sonnet, where the word *captain* is used with at least as much harshness as in the text:
"And captive good attending *captain* ill."
Again, in another of his Sonnets:
"Like stones of worth they thinly placed are,
"Or *captain* jewels in the carkanet."
Dr. Johnson with great probability proposes to read *felon* instead of *fellow*. *Malone.*

The word *captain* has been very injudiciously restored. That it cannot be the author's is evident from its spoiling what will otherwise be a metrical line. Nor is his using it elsewhere any proof that he meant to use it here. *Ritson.*

I have not scrupled to insert Dr. Johnson's emendation, *felon*, for *fellow*, in the text; but do not perceive how the line can become strictly metrical by the omission of the word—*captain*, unless, with Sir Thomas Hanmer, we transpose the conjunction—*and*, and read:

The ass more than the lion, and *the felon*, ——. *Steevens.*

[8] —— *sin's extremest* gust; *Gust*, for aggravation. *Warburton.*

Gust is here in its common sense; the utmost degree of *appetite* for sin. *Johnson.*

I believe *gust* means *rashness* The allusion may be to a sudden *gust of wind*. *Steevens.*

So we say, it was done in a sudden *gust* of passion. *Malone.*

[9] —— *by* mercy, *'tis most just.*] By *mercy* is meant *equity*. But we must read:

—— —— *'tis* made *just*. *Warburton.*

Mercy is not put for equity If such explanation be allowed, what can be difficult? The meaning is, *I call* mercy *herself* to witness, that defensive violence is just. *Johnson.*

The meaning, I think, is, Homicide in our own defence, *by a merciful and lenient interpretation* of the laws, is considered as justifiable. *Malone.*

Dr Johnson's explanation is the more spirited; but a passage in *King John* should seem to countenance that of Mr. Malone:

"Some sins do bear their privilege on earth,
"And so doth yours ——." *Steevens.*

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Weigh but the crime with this.
2 *Sen.* You breathe in vain.
Alcib. In vain? his service done
At Lacedæmon, and Byzantium,
Were a sufficient briber for his life.
1 *Sen.* What 's that?
Alcib. Why, I say,[1] my lords, h' as done
fair service,
And slain in fight many of your enemies:
How full of valour did he bear himself
In the last conflict, and made plenteous wounds?
2 *Sen.* He has made too much plenty with 'em,[2] he
Is a sworn rioter:[3] h' as a sin that often
Drowns him, and takes his valour prisoner:
If there were no foes, that were enough alone[4]
To overcome him: in that beastly fury
He has been known to commit outrages,
And cherish factions: 'Tis inferr'd to us,
His days are foul, and his drink dangerous.
1 *Sen.* He dies.
Alcib. Hard fate! he might have died in war.
My lords, if not for any parts in him,
(Though his right arm might purchase his own time,
And be in debt to none,) yet, more to move you,
Take my deserts to his, and join them both:
And, for I know, your reverend ages love
Security, I 'll pawn[5] my victories, all

[1] *Why, I say,*] The personal pronoun was inserted by the editor of the second folio. *Malone.*

[2] —— *with* 'em,] The folio—with *him*. *Johnson.*
The correction was made by the editor of the second folio. *Malone.*

[3] *Is a* sworn rioter:] A *sworn rioter* is a man who practises riot, as if he had by an oath made it his duty. *Johnson.*
The expression, *a sworn rioter*, seems to be similar to that of *sworn brothers*. See Vol. IX, p. 235, n. 8. *Malone.*

[4] —— *alone* —] This word was judiciously supplied by Sir Thomas Hanmer, to complete the measure. Thus, in *All 's Well that Ends Well:*
" —————— Good *alone*
" Is good ——." *Steevens.*

[5] —— *your reverend ages love*
Security, *I 'll* pawn &c.] He charges them obliquely with being usurers. *Johnson.*

Were there no foes, that were itself enough. MS.

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My honour to you, upon his good returns.
If by this crime he owes the law his life,
Why, let the war receive 't in valiant gore;
For law is strict, and war is nothing more.

1 *Sen.* We are for law, he dies; urge it no more,
On height of our displeasure: Friend, or brother,
He forfeits his own blood, that spills another.

Alcib. Must it be so? it must not be. My lords,
I do beseech you, know me.

2 *Sen.* How?

Alcib. Call me to your remembrances.[6]

3 *Sen.* What?

Alcib. I cannot think, but your age has forgot me;
It could not else be, I should prove so base,[7]
To sue, and be denied such common grace:
My wounds ache at you.

1 *Sen.* Do you dare our anger?
'Tis in few words, but spacious in effect;[8]
We banish thee for ever.

Alcib. Banish me?
Banish your dotage; banish usury,
That makes the senate ugly.

1 *Sen.* If, after two days' shine, Athens contain thee,
Attend our weightier judgment. And, not to swell our spirit,[9]

So afterwards:

"———— banish *usury*
"That makes the senate ugly." *Malone.*

[6] ——*remembrances.*] is here used as a word of five syllables. In the singular number it occurs as a quadrisyllable only. See *Twelfth Night*, Act I, sc. i:

"And lasting in her sad *remembrance*." *Steevens.*

[7] —— *I should prove so* base,] *Base* for dishonoured. *Warburton.*

[8] *Do you dare our anger?*
'Tis in few words, but spacious in effect;] This reading may pass, but perhaps the author wrote:

———— *our anger?*
'Tis few in *words, but spacious in effect.* *Johnson.*

[9] *And*, not *to swell* our *spirit*,] I believe, means, *not to put ourselves into any tumour of rage*, take our definitive resolution. So, in *King Henry VIII*, Act III, sc. i:

"The hearts of princes kiss obedience,
"So much they love it; but, to stubborn spirits,
"They *swell* and grow as terrible as storms." *Steevens.*

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He shall be executed presently. [*Exeunt* Senators.

Alcib. Now the gods keep you old enough; that you may live
Only in bone, that none may look on you!
I am worse than mad: I have kept back their foes,
While they have told their money, and let out
Their coin upon large interest; I myself,
Rich only in large hurts;—All those, for this?
Is this the balsam, that the usuring senate
Pours into captains' wounds? ha! banishment?[1]
It comes not ill; I hate not to be banish'd;
It is a cause worthy my spleen and fury,
That I may strike at Athens. I 'll cheer up
My discontented troops, and lay for hearts.
'Tis honour, with most lands to be at odds;[2]
Soldiers should brook as little wrongs, as gods. [*Exit.*

[1] —— *ha!* banishment?] Thus the second folio. Its ever-blundering predecessor omits the interjection, *ha!* and consequently spoils the metre.—The same exclamation occurs in *Romeo and Juliet:*

"*Ha!* banishment? be merciful, say—death ——."

Steevens.

[2] —— —— *and lay for hearts.*

'*Tis honour, with most* lands *to be at odds;*] But surely even in a soldier's sense of honour, there is very little in being at odds with all about him; which shows rather a quarrelsome disposition than a valiant one. Besides, this was not Alcibiades's case. He was only fallen out with the Athenians. A phrase in the foregoing line will direct us to the right reading. I will *lay*, says he, *for hearts;* which is a metaphor taken from card-play, and signifies to game deep and boldly. It is plain then the figure was continued in the following line, which should be read thus:

'*Tis honour with most* hands *to be at odds;*

i. e. to fight upon odds, or at disadvantage; as he must do against the united strength of Athens; and this, by soldiers, is accounted *honourable*. Shakspeare uses the same metaphor on the same occasion, in *Coriolanus:*

"He *lurch'd* all swords." *Warburton.*

I think *hands* is very properly substituted for *lands*. In the foregoing line, for, *lay for hearts*, I would read, *play* for *hearts*.

Johnson.

I do not conceive that to *lay for hearts* is a metaphor taken from card-play, or that *lay* should be changed into *play*. We should now say, *to lay out for hearts*, i. e. the affections of the people; but *lay* is used singly, as it is here, by Jonson, in *The Devil is an Ass*, [Mr. Whalley's edition] Vol. IV, p. 33:

"*Lay* for some pretty principality." *Tyrwhitt.*

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SCENE VI.

A magnificent Room in Timon's *House.*

Musick. Tables set out: Servants attending. Enter divers Lords,[3] *at several Doors.*

1 *Lord.* The good time of day to you, sir.

2 *Lord.* I also wish it to you. I think, this honourable lord did but try us this other day.

1 *Lord.* Upon that were my thoughts tiring,[4] when

A kindred expression occurs in Marlowe's *Lust's Dominion*, 1657:

"He *takes up* Spanish *hearts* on trust, to pay them

"When he shall finger Castile's crown." *Malone.*

'*Tis honour, with most* lands *to be at odds;*] I think, with Dr. Johnson, that *lands* cannot be right. To assert that it is honourable to fight with the *greatest* part of the *world*, is very wild. I believe therefore our author meant that Alcibiades in his spleen against the *Senate*, from whom alone he has received an injury, should say:

'*Tis honour with most* lords *to be at odds.* *Malone.*

I adhere to the old reading. It is surely more honourable *to wrangle for a score of kingdoms*, (as Miranda expresses it) than to enter into quarrels with *lords*, or any other private adversaries. *Steevens.*

The objection to the old reading still in my apprehension remains. It is not difficult for him who is so inclined, to quarrel with a lord; (or with any other person;) but not so easy to be at odds with his *land*. Neither does the observation just made, prove that it is honourable to quarrel, or to be at odds, *with most* of the lands or kingdoms of the earth, which must, I conceive, be proved, before the old reading can be supported. *Malone.*

By *most* lands, perhaps our author means *greatest* lands. So, in *King Henry VI*, P. I, Act IV, sc. i:

"But always resolute in *most* extremes."

i. e. in *greatest*. Alcibiades, therefore, may be willing to regard a contest with a great and extensive territory, like that of Athens, as a circumstance honourable to himself. *Steevens.*

[3] *Enter divers* Lords,] In the modern editions these are called *Senators*; but it is clear from what is said concerning the banishment of Alcibiades, that this must be wrong. I have therefore substituted *Lords*. The old copy has "Enter divers *friends*." *Malone.*

[4] *Upon that were my thoughts* tiring,] A hawk, I think, is said to *tire*, when she amuses herself with pecking a pheasant's wing, or any thing that puts her in mind of prey. To *tire* upon a thing, is therefore, to be *idly employed upon it*. *Johnson.*

I believe Dr. Johnson is mistaken. *Tiring* means here, I think,

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we encountered: I hope, it is not so low with him, as he made it seem in the trial of his several friends.

2 *Lord.* It should not be, by the persuasion of his new feasting.

1 *Lord.* I should think so: He hath sent me an earnest inviting, which many my near occasions did urge me to put off; but he hath conjured me beyond them, and I must needs appear.

2 *Lord.* In like manner was I in debt to my importunate business, but he would not hear my excuse. I am sorry, when he sent to borrow of me, that my provision was out.

1 *Lord.* I am sick of that grief too, as I understand how all things go.

2 *Lord.* Every man here 's so. What would he have borrowed of you?

1 *Lord.* A thousand pieces.

2 *Lord.* A thousand pieces!

1 *Lord.* What of you?

3 *Lord.* He sent to me, sir,—Here he comes.

Enter TIMON, *and* Attendants.

Tim. With all my heart, gentlemen both:—And how fare you?

1 *Lord.* Ever at the best, hearing well of your lordship.

2 *Lord.* The swallow follows not summer more willing, than we your lordship.

Tim. [*aside*] Nor more willingly leaves winter; such summer-birds are men.——Gentlemen, our dinner will not recompense this long stay: feast your ears with the

fixed, fastened, as the hawk fastens its beak eagerly on its prey. So, in our author's *Venus and Adonis:*

"Like as an empty eagle, sharp by fast,
"*Tires* with her beak on feathers, flesh, and bone,—."

Tirouër, that is, *tiring* for hawks, as Cotgrave calls it, signified any thing by which the falconer brought the bird back, and fixed him to his hand. A capon's wing was often used for this purpose.

In *King Henry VI,* Part II, we have a kindred xpression:

"—— your *thoughts*
"*Beat on a* crown." *Malone.*

Dr. Johnson's explanation, I believe, is right Thus, in *The Winter's Tale,* Antigonus is said to be "woman-*tir'd,*" i. e. *pecked* by a woman, as we now say, with a similar allusion, hen-*pecked.*

Steevens.

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musick awhile; if they will fare so harshly on the trumpet's sound: we shall to 't presently.

1 *Lord.* I hope, it remains not unkindly with your lordship, that I returned you an empty messenger.

Tim. O, sir, let it not trouble you.

2 *Lord.* My noble lord, ——

Tim. Ah, my good friend! what cheer?

[*The Banquet brought in.*

2 *Lord.* My most honourable lord, I am e'en sick of shame, that, when your lordship this other day sent to me, I was so unfortunate a beggar.

Tim. Think not on 't, sir.

2 *Lord.* If you had sent but two hours before, —

Tim. Let it not cumber your better remembrance.[5] — Come, bring in all together.

2 *Lord.* All covered dishes!

1 *Lord.* Royal cheer, I warrant you.

3 *Lord.* Doubt not that, if money, and the season can yield it.

1 *Lord.* How do you? What 's the news?

3 *Lord.* Alcibiades is banished: Hear you of it?

1 & 2 *Lord.* Alcibiades banished!

3 *Lord.* 'Tis so, be sure of it.

1 *Lord.* How? how?

2 *Lord.* I pray you, upon what?

Tim. My worthy friends, will you draw near?

3 *Lord.* I 'll tell you more anon. Here 's a noble feast toward.[6]

2 *Lord.* This is the old man still.

3 *Lord.* Will 't hold? will 't hold?

2 *Lord.* It does: but time will—and so ——

3 *Lord.* I do conceive.

Tim. Each man to his stool, with that spur as he would to the lip of his mistress: your diet shall be in all places alike.[7] Make not a city feast of it, to let the meat cool ere

[5] —— *your* better *remembrance.*] i. e. your *good* memory: the *comparative* for the *positive* degree. *Steevens.*

[6] *Here's a noble feast* toward.] i. e. in a state of readiness. So, in *Romeo and Juliet:*

"We have a foolish trifling banquet *towards.*" *Steevens.*

[7] —— *your diet shall be in all places alike.*] See *The Winter's Tale*, Vol. VI, p. 181, n. 1. *Steevens.*

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we can agree upon the first place: Sit, sit. The gods require our thanks.

You great benefactors, sprinkle our society with thankfulness. For your own gifts, make yourselves praised: but reserve still to give, lest your deities be despised. Lend to each man enough, that one need not lend to another: for, were your godheads to borrow of men, men would forsake the gods. Make the meat be beloved, more than the man that gives it. Let no assembly of twenty be without a score of villains: If there sit twelve women at the table, let a dozen of them be—as they are.—The rest of your fees,[8] *O gods,—the senators of Athens, together with the common lag*[9] *of people,—what is amiss in them, you gods, make suitable for destruction. For these my present friends,—as they are to me nothing, so in nothing bless them, and to nothing they are welcome.*

Uncover, dogs, and lap.

[*The Dishes uncovered are full of warm Water.*

Some speak. What does his lordship mean?

Some other. I know not.

Tim. May you a better feast never behold,
You knot of mouth-friends! smoke, and luke-warm water
Is your perfection.[1] This is Timon's last;
Who stuck and spangled you with flatteries,
Washes it off, and sprinkles in your faces

[*Throwing Water in their Faces.*

Your reeking villainy. Live loath'd, and long,[2]

[8] *The rest of your* fees,] We should read—*foes. Warburton.*

We must surely read *foes* instead of *fees*. I find no sense in the present reading. *M. Mason.*

[9] —— *the common* lag —] Old copy—*leg*. Corrected by Mr. Rowe. *Malone.*

The *fag*-end of a web of cloth is, in some places, called the *lag*-end. *Steevens.*

[1] *Is your* perfection.] Your *perfection*, is *the highest of your excellence. Johnson.*

[2] —— *Live loath'd, and long,*] This thought has occurred twice before:

"—————— let not that part
"Of nature my lord paid for, be of power
"To expel sickness, but *prolong his hour.*"

Again:

"Gods keep you *old* enough," &c. *Steevens.*

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Most smiling, smooth, detested parasites,
Courteous destroyers, affable wolves, meek bears,
You fools of fortune,[3] trencher-friends, time's flies,[4]
Cap and knee slaves, vapours, and minute-jacks![5]
Of man, and beast, the infinite malady[6]
Crust you quite o'er!—What, dost thou go?
Soft, take thy physick first,—thou too,—and thou;—
[*Throws the Dishes at them, and drives them out.*
Stay, I will lend thee money, borrow none.—
What, all in motion? Henceforth be no feast,
Whereat a villain 's not a welcome guest.
Burn, house; sink, Athens! henceforth hated be
Of Timon, man, and all humanity! [*Exit.*

Re-enter the Lords, *with other* Lords *and* Senators.

1 *Lord.* How now, my lords?[7]

2 *Lord.* Know you the quality of lord Timon's fury?

3 *Lord.* Pish! did you see my cap?

4 *Lord.* I have lost my gown.

3 *Lord.* He 's but a mad lord, and nought but humour sways him. He gave me a jewel the other day, and now he has beat it out of my hat:—Did you see my jewel?

4 *Lord.* Did you see my cap?

2 *Lord.* Here 'tis.

4 *Lord.* Here lies my gown.

1 *Lord.* Let 's make no stay.

[3] ——*fools of fortune,*] The same expression occurs in *Romeo and Juliet*:

"O! I am *fortune's fool.*" *Steevens.*

[4] —— *time's flies,*] Flies of a season. *Johnson.*

So, before:

"—— one cloud of winter showers,
"These *flies* are couch'd." *Steevens.*

[5] —— *minute-jacks!*] Sir Thomas Hanmer thinks it means *Jack-a-lantern,* which shines and disappears in an instant. What it was I know not; but it was something of quick motion, mentioned in *King Richard III.* *Johnson.*

A *minute-jack* is what was called formerly a *Jack of the clock-house;* an image whose office was the same as one of those at St. Dunstan's church in Fleet street. See *King Richard III,* Vol. XI, p. 132, n. 1. *Steevens.*

[6] —— *the infinite malady* —] Every kind of disease incident to man and beast. *Johnson.*

[7] *How now, my lords?*] This and the next speech are spoken by the newly arrived Lords. *Malone.*

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2 *Lord.* Lord Timon 's mad.
3 *Lord.* I feel 't upon my bones.
4 *Lord.* One day he gives us diamonds, next day stones.[8] [*Exeunt.*

ACT IV.....SCENE I.

Without the Walls of Athens.

Enter TIMON.

Tim. Let me look back upon thee, O thou wall,
That girdlest in those wolves! Dive in the earth,
And fence not Athens! Matrons, turn incontinent;
Obedience fail in children! slaves, and fools,
Pluck the grave wrinkled senate from the bench,
And minister in their steads! to general filths[9]
Convert o' the instant, green[1] virginity!
Do 't in your parent' eyes! bankrupts, hold fast;
Rather than render back, out with your knives,
And cut your trusters' throats! bound servants, steal!
Large-handed robbers your grave masters are,
And pill by law! maid, to thy master's bed;
Thy mistress is o' the brothel![2] son of sixteen,

[8] —— *stones.*] As Timon has thrown nothing at his worthless guests, except warm water and empty dishes, I am induced, with Mr. Malone, to believe that the more ancient drama described in p. 303, had been read by our author, and that he supposed he had introduced from it the "painted *stones*" as part of his banquet; though in reality he had omitted them. The present mention therefore of such missiles, appears to want propriety. *Steevens.*

[9] —— *general filths* —] i. e. common sewers. *Steevens.*

[1] —— *green* —] i. e. immature. So, in *Antony and Cleopatra:*
"When I was *green* in judgment ——." *Steevens.*

[2] —— o' *the brothel!*] So the old copies. Sir Thomas Hanmer reads, *i'* the brothel. *Johnson.*
One would suppose it to mean, that the mistress frequented the brothel; and so Sir Thomas Hanmer understood it. *Ritson.*
The meaning is, go to thy master's bed, for he is alone; thy mistress is now *of* the brothel; is now there. In the old copy, *i' th'*, *o' th'*, and *a' th'*, are written with very little care, or rather seem to have been set down at random in different places. *Malone.*

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Pluck the lin'd crutch from thy old limping sire,
With it beat out his brains! piety, and fear,
Religion to the gods, peace, justice, truth,
Domestick awe, night-rest, and neighbourhood,
Instruction, manners, mysteries, and trades,
Degrees, observances, customs, and laws,
Decline to your confounding contraries,[3]
And yet confusion[4] live!—Plagues, incident to men,
Your potent and infectious fevers heap
On Athens, ripe for stroke! thou cold sciatica,
Cripple our senators, that their limbs may halt
As lamely as their manners! lust and liberty[5]
Creep in the minds and marrows of our youth;
That 'gainst the stream of virtue they may strive,
And drown themselves in riot! itches, blains,
Sow all the Athenian bosoms; and their crop
Be general leprosy! breath infect breath;
That their society, as their friendship, may
Be merely poison! Nothing I 'll bear from thee,
But nakedness, thou détestable town!
Take thou that too, with multiplying banns![6]
Timon will to the woods; where he shall find
The unkindest beast more kinder than mankind.
The gods confound (hear me, you good gods all,)
The Athenians both within and out that wall!

"*Of* the brothel" is the true reading. So, in *King Lear*, Act II, sc. ii, the Steward says to Kent, "Art *of* the house?" *Steevens.*

3 —— confounding *contraries*,] i. e. contrarieties whose nature it is to *waste* or *destroy* each other. So, in *King Henry V*:

"—— as doth a galled rock
"O'erhang and jutty his *confounded* base." *Steevens.*

4 —— yet *confusion*—] Sir Thomas Hanmer reads, *let* confusion; but the meaning may be, *though by such confusion all things seem to hasten to dissolution*, yet *let not dissolution come, but the miseries of* confusion *continue*. *Johnson.*

5 —— *liberty*—] *Liberty* is here used for *libertinism*. So, in *The Comedy of Errors*:

"And many such like *liberties* of sin;"

apparently meaning—*libertines*. *Steevens.*

6 —— multiplying *banns!*] i. e. accumulated curses. *Multiplying* for *multiplied*: the *active* participle with a *passive* signification. See Vol. II, p. 186, n. 9. *Steevens.*

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And grant, as Timon grows, his hate may grow
To the whole race of mankind, high, and low!
Amen. [*Exit.*

SCENE II.

Athens. *A Room in* Timon's *House.*

Enter FLAVIUS,[7] *with Two or Three* Servants.

1 *Serv.* Hear you, master steward, where 's our master?
Are we undone? cast off? nothing remaining?
Flav. Alack, my fellows, what should I say to you?
Let me be recorded[8] by the righteous gods,
I am as poor as you.
1 *Serv.* Such a house broke!
So noble a master fallen! All gone! and not
One friend, to take his fortune by the arm,
And go along with him!
2 *Serv.* As we do turn our backs
From our companion, thrown into his grave;
So his familiars to his buried fortunes[9]
Slink all away; leave their false vows with him,
Like empty purses pick'd: and his poor self,

[7] *Enter* Flavius,] Nothing contributes more to the exaltation of Timon's character than the zeal and fidelity of his servants. Nothing but real virtue can be honoured by domesticks; nothing but impartial kindness can gain affection from dependants. *Johnson.*

[8] *Let* me *be recorded* —] In compliance with ancient elliptical phraseology, the word *me*, which disorders the measure, might be omitted. Sir Thomas Hanmer reads:
Let it *be recorded* &c. *Steevens.*

[9] —— to *his buried fortunes* —] So the old copies. Sir T. Hanmer reads *from*; but the old reading might stand. *Johnson.*
I should suppose that the words *from*, in the second line, and *to* in the third line, have been misplaced, and that the original reading was:
As we do turn our backs
To *our companion thrown into his grave*,
So his familiars from *his buried fortunes*
Slink all away; ——.
When we leave a person, we turn our backs *to* him, not *from* him. *M. Mason.*

So his familiars to *his buried fortunes* &c.] So those who were familiar to his buried fortunes, who in the most ample manner participated of them, slink all away, &c. *Malone.*

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A dedicated beggar to the air,
With his disease of all-shunn'd poverty,
Walks, like contempt, alone.—More of our fellows.

Enter other Servants.

Flav. All broken implements of a ruin'd house.

3 *Serv.* Yet do our hearts wear Timon's livery,
That see I by our faces; we are fellows still,
Serving alike in sorrow: Leak'd is our bark;
And we, poor mates, stand on the dying deck,
Hearing the surges threat: we must all part
Into this sea of air.

Flav. Good fellows all,
The latest of my wealth I 'll share amongst you.
Wherever we shall meet, for Timon's sake,
Let 's yet be fellows; let 's shake our heads, and say,
As 'twere a knell unto our master's fortunes,
We have seen better days. Let each take some;
[*Giving them Money.*
Nay, put out all your hands. Not one word more:
Thus part we rich in sorrow, parting poor.[1]
[*Exeunt* Servants.
O, the fierce wretchedness[2] that glory brings us!
Who would not wish to be from wealth exempt,
Since riches point to misery and contempt?
Who 'd be so mock'd with glory? or to live
But in a dream of friendship? and revive

1 —— rich *in sorrow, parting* poor.] This conceit occurs again in *King Lear:*

"Fairest Cordelia, thou art most *rich*, being *poor*."
Steevens.

2 *O, the* fierce *wretchedness* —] I believe *fierce* is here used for *hasty, precipitate.* Perhaps it is employed in the same sense by Ben Jonson in his *Poetaster:*

"And Lupus, for your *fierce* credulity,
"One fit him with a larger pair of ears."

In *King Henry VIII,* our author has *fierce vanities.* In all instances it may mean *glaring, conspicuous, violent.* So, in Ben Jonson's *Bartholomew Fair,* the Puritan says:

"Thy hobby-horse is an idol, a *fierce* and rank idol."

Again, in *King John:*

"O vanity of sickness! *fierce* extremes
"In their continuance will not feel themselves."

Again, in *Love's Labour 's Lost:*

"With all the *fierce* endeavour of your wit." *Steevens.*

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To have his pomp, and all what state compounds,
But only painted, like his varnish'd friends?
Poor honest lord, brought low by his own heart;
Undone by goodness! Strange, unusual blood,[3]
When man's worst sin is, he does too much good!
Who then dares to be half so kind again?
For bounty, that makes gods, does still mar men.
My dearest lord,—bless'd, to be most accurs'd,
Rich, only to be wretched;—thy great fortunes
Are made thy chief afflictions. Alas, kind lord!
He 's flung in rage from this ungrateful seat
Of monstrous friends: nor has he with him to
Supply his life, or that which can command it.
I 'll follow, and inquire him out:
I 'll ever serve his mind with my best will;
Whilst I have gold, I 'll be his steward still. [*Exit.*

SCENE III.

The Woods.

Enter TIMON.

Tim. O blessed breeding sun, draw from the earth
Rotten humidity; below thy sister's orb[4]
Infect the air! Twinn'd brothers of one womb,—

[3] —— *Strange, unusual* blood,] Of this passage, I suppose, every reader would wish for a correction: but the word, harsh as it is, stands fortified by the rhyme, to which, perhaps, it owes its introduction. I know not what to propose. Perhaps—

—— *Strange, unusual* mood,

may, by some, be thought better, and by others worse. *Johnson.*

In *The Yorkshire Tragedy*, 1608, attributed to Shakspeare, *blood* seems to be used for *inclination, propensity:*

"For 'tis our *blood* to love what we are forbidden."

Strange, unusual blood, may therefore mean, strange unusual disposition.

Again, in the 5th Book of Gower, *De Confessione Amantis*, fol. iii, b:

"And thus of thilke unkinde *blood*
"Stant the memorie unto this daie."

Gower is speaking of the ingratitude of one Adrian, a lord of Rome. *Steevens.*

Throughout these plays *blood* is frequently used in the sense of natural propensity or disposition. *Malone.*

[4] —— *below thy sister's orb* —] That is, the moon's, this *sublunary* world. *Johnson.*

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Whose procreation, residence, and birth,
Scarce is dividant,—touch them with several fortunes;
The greater scorns the lesser: Not nature,
To whom all sores lay siege, can bear great fortune,
But by contempt of nature.[5]
Raise me this beggar, and denude that lord;[6]

[5] ——— *Not nature,*
To whom all sores lay siege, can bear great fortune,
But by contempt of nature.] The meaning I take to be this: *Brother, when his fortune is enlarged, will scorn brother;* for this is the general depravity of human nature, which, *besieged as it is by misery,* admonished as it is of want and imperfection, when *elevated by fortune, will despise* beings of *nature like its own. Johnson.*

Mr. M. Mason observes, that this passage "but by the addition of a single letter may be rendered clearly intelligible; by merely reading *natures* instead of *nature.*" The meaning will then be—"Not even beings reduced to the utmost extremity of wretchedness, can bear good fortune, without contemning their fellow-creatures."—The word *natures* is afterwards used in a similar sense by Apemantus:

"——— Call the creatures
"Whose naked *natures* live in all the spite
"Of wreakful heaven," &c.

Perhaps, in the present instance, we ought to complete the measure by reading:

——— *not* those *natures,* ———. *Steevens.*

But by is here used for *without. Malone.*

[6] *Raise me this beggar, and* denude *that lord;*] [Old copy—*deny 't* that lord.] Where is the sense and English of *deny 't that lord?* Deny him what? What preceding noun is there to which the pronoun *it* is to be referred? And it would be absurd to think the poet meant, deny to *raise* that lord. The antithesis must be, let fortune *raise* this beggar, and let her *strip* and *despoil* that lord of all his pomp and ornaments, &c. which sense is completed by this slight alteration:

——— *and* denude *that lord;* ———.

So, Lord Rea, in his relation of M. Hamilton's plot, written in 1650: "All these Hamiltons had *denuded* themselves of their fortunes and estates." And Charles the First, in his message to the parliament says: "*Denude* ourselves of all."—Clar. Vol. III, p. 15, octavo edit. *Warburton.*

So, as Theobald has observed, in our author's *Venus and Adonis:*

"Pluck down the rich, enrich the poor with treasures."
Malone.

Perhaps the former reading, however irregular, is the true one. Raise me that beggar, and deny a proportionable degree of elevation to that lord. A lord is not so high a title in the state, but

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The senator shall bear contempt hereditary,
The beggar native honour.
It is the pasture lards the brother's sides,[7] *wether's*

that a man originally poor might be raised to one above it. We might read *devest* that lord. *Devest* is an English law phrase, which Shakspeare uses in *King Lear:*

"Since now we will *devest* us both of rule," &c.

The word which Dr. Warburton would introduce, is not, however, uncommon. I find it in *The Tragedie of Cræsus*, 1604:

"As one of all happiness *denuded*." *Steevens.*

[7] *It is the* pasture *lards the* brother's *sides,*] This, as the editors have ordered it, is an idle repetition at the best; supposing it did, indeed, contain the same sentiment as the foregoing lines. But Shakspeare meant quite a different thing: and having, like a sensible writer, made a smart observation, he illustrates it by a similitude thus:

It is the pasture lards the wether's *sides,*
The want that makes him lean.

And the similitude is extremely beautiful, as conveying this satirical reflection; there is no more difference between man and man in the esteem of superficial and corrupt judgments, than between a fat sheep and a lean one. *Warburton.*

This passage is very obscure, nor do I discover any clear sense, even though we should admit the emendation. Let us inspect the text as it stands in the original edition:

It is the pastour *lards the* brother's *sides,*
The want that makes him leave:

Dr. Warburton found the passage already changed thus:

It is the pasture *lards the* beggar's *sides,*
The want that makes him lean.

And upon this reading of no authority, raised another equally uncertain.

Alterations are never to be made without necessity. Let us see what sense the genuine reading will afford. Poverty, says the poet, *bears contempt hereditary*, and *wealth native honour*. To illustrate this position, having already mentioned the case of a poor and rich brother, he remarks, that this preference is given to wealth by those whom it least becomes; *it is the* pastour *that greases or* flatters *the rich* brother, and will grease him on till *want make him leave*. The poet then goes on to ask, *Who dares to say this man,* this pastour *is a flatterer;* the crime is universal, through all the world *the learned pate*, with allusion to the pastour, *ducks to the golden fool* If it be objected, as it may justly be, that the mention of a pastour is unsuitable, we must remember the mention of *grace* and *cherubims* in this play, and many such anachronisms in many others. I would therefore read thus:

It is the pastour *lards the* brother's *sides,*
'Tis *want that makes him* leave.

The obscurity is still great. Perhaps a line is lost. I have at least given the original reading. *Johnson.*

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The want that makes him lean. Who dares, who dares,

Perhaps Shakspeare wrote *pasterer*, for I meet with such a word in Greene's *Farewell to Follie*, 1617: "Alexander, before he fell into the Persian delicacies, refused those cooks and *pasterers* that Ada queen of Caria sent to him." There is likewise a proverb among Ray's *Collection*, which seems to afford much the same meaning as this passage in Shakspeare:—"Every one basteth the fat hog, while the lean one burneth." Again, in *Troilus and Cressida*, Act II:

"That were to *enlard* his *fat-already* pride." *Steevens.*

In this very difficult passage, which still remains obscure, some liberty may be indulged. Dr. Farmer proposes to read it thus:

It is the pasterer *lards the* broader *sides,*
The gaunt *that makes him* leave.

And in support of this conjecture, he observes, that the Saxon *d* is frequently converted into *th*, as in murther, *murder*, burthen, *burden*, &c. *Reed.*

That the passage is corrupt as it stands in the old copy, no one, I suppose, can doubt; emendation therefore in this and a few other places, is not a matter of choice but necessity. I have already more than once observed, that many corruptions have crept into the old copy, by the transcriber's ear deceiving him. In *Coriolanus* we have *higher*, for *hire*, and *hope* for *holp;* in the present play *reverends* for *reverends't;* and in almost every play similar corruptions. In *King Richard II*, quarto, 1598, we find the very error that happened here:

"——— and bedew
"Her *pastor's* grass with faithful English blood."

Again, in *As you Like it*, folio, 1623, we find, "I have heard him read many *lectors* against it;" instead of *lectures*.

Pasture, when the *u* is sounded thin, and *pastor*, are scarcely distinguishable.

Thus, as I conceive, the true reading of the first disputed word of this contested passage is ascertained. In *As you Like it* we have —"good pasture makes fat sheep." Again, in the same play:

"Anon, a careless herd,
"Full of *the pasture*, jumps along by him," &c.

The meaning then of the passage is,—It is the land alone which each man possesses that makes him rich, and proud, and flattered; and the want of it, that makes him poor, and an object of contempt. I suppose, with Dr. Johnson, that Shakspeare was still thinking of the rich and poor *brother* already described.

I doubt much whether Dr. Johnson himself was satisfied with his far-fetched explication of *pastour*, as applied to brother; [See his note.] and I think no one else can be satisfied with it. In order to give it some little support, he supposes "*This* man 's a flatterer," in the following passage, to relate to the imaginary *pastor* in this; whereas those words indubitably relate to *any* one individual selected out of the aggregate mass of mankind.

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In purity of manhood stand upright,

Dr. Warburton reads—*wether's* sides: which affords a commodious sense, but is so far removed from the original reading as to be inadmissible. Shakspeare, I have no doubt, thought at first of those animals that are fatted by *pasture*, and passed from thence to the *proprietor* of the *soil*.

I have sometimes thought that he might have written—the *breather's* sides. He has thrice used the word elsewhere. "I will chide no *breather* in the world, but myself," says Orlando in *As you Like it*. Again, in one of his Sonnets:

"When all the *breathers* of this world are dead."

Again, in *Antony and Cleopatra*:

"She shows a body, rather than a life;

"A statue than a *breather*."

If this was the author's word in the passage before us, it must mean *every living animal*. But I have little faith in such conjectures.

Concerning the third word there can be no difficulty. *Leane* was the old spelling of *lean*, and the *u* in the MSS. of our author's time is not to be distinguished from an *n*. Add to this, that in the first folio *u* is constantly employed where we now use a *v*; and hence, by inversion, the two letters were often confounded (as they are at this day in almost every *proof*-sheet of every book that passes through the press). Of this I have given various instances in a note in Vol. III, p. 140, n. 5.

But it is not necessary to have recourse to these instances. This very word *leave* is again printed instead of *leane*, in *King Henry IV*, Part II, quarto, 1600:

"The lives of your loving complices

"*Leave* on your health"

On the other hand, in *King Henry VIII*, 1623, we have *leane* instead of *leave*: "You 'll *leane* your noise anon, you rascals" But any argument on this point is superfluous, since the context clearly shows that *lean* must have been the word intended by Shakspeare.

Such emendations as those now adopted, *thus founded* and supported, are not capricious conjectures, against which no one has set his face more than myself, but almost certainties.

This note has run out into an inordinate length, for which I shall make no other apology than that finding it *necessary* to depart from the reading of the old copy, to obtain any sense, I thought it incumbent on me to support the readings I have chosen, in the best manner in my power. *Malone*.

As a *brother* (meaning, I suppose, a churchman,) does not, literally speaking, fatten himself by feeding on *land*, it is probable that *pasture* signifies *eating* in general, without reference to *terra firma*. So, in *Love's Labour's Lost*:

"Food for his rage, re*pasture* for his den."

Pasture, in the sense of nourishment collected from fields, will undoubtedly fatten the sides of a sheep or an ox, but who ever

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And say, *This man 's a flatterer?*[8] if one be,
So are they all; for every grize of fortune[9]
Is smooth'd by that below: the learned pate
Ducks to the golden fool: All is oblique;
There 's nothing level in our cursed natures,
But direct villainy. Therefore, be abhorr'd
All feasts, societies, and throngs of men!
His semblable, yea, himself, Timon disdains:
Destruction fang mankind![1]—Earth, yield me roots!
[*Digging.*
Who seeks for better of thee, sauce his palate
With thy most operant poison! What is here?
Gold? yellow, glittering precious gold? No, gods,
I am no idle votarist.[2] Roots, you clear heavens![3]

describes the owner of the fields as having derived from them his *embonpoint?*

The emendation—*lean* is found in the second folio, which should not have been denied the praise to which it is entitled.

Breather's sides can never be right, for who is likely to grow fat through the mere privilege of *breathing?* or who indeed can receive sustenance without it?

The reading in the text may be the true one; but the condition in which this play was transmitted to us, is such as will warrant repeated doubts in almost every scene of it. *Steevens.*

[8] *And say,* This *man 's a flatterer?*] *This man* does not refer to any particular person before mentioned, as Dr. Johnson thought, but to some supposed individual. Who, says Timon, can with propriety lay his hand on *this* or *that* individual, and pronounce him a peculiar flatterer? All mankind are equally flatterers. So, in *As you Like it:*

"Who can come in, and say, that I mean her,
"When such a one as she, such is her neighbour?"
Malone.

[9] ——*for every* grize *of fortune*—] *Grize* for step or degree. *Pope.*

[1] —— fang *mankind!*] i. e. seize, gripe. This verb is used by Decker in his *Match me at London,* 1631:

"—— bite any catchpole that *fangs* for you." *Steevens.*

[2] —— *no idle votarist.*] No insincere or inconstant supplicant. *Gold* will not serve me instead of *roots. Johnson.*

[3] —— *you* clear heavens!] This may mean either ye *cloudless skies,* or *ye deities exempt from guilt.* Shakspeare mentions the *clearest gods* in *King Lear;* and in *Acolastus,* a comedy, 1540, a stranger is thus addressed: "Good stranger or *alyen, clere* gest," &c. Again, in *The Rape of Lucrece:*

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Thus much of this, will make black, white; foul, fair;
Wrong, right; base, noble; old, young; coward, valiant.
Ha, you gods! why this? What this, you gods? Why this
Will lug your priests and servants from your sides;[4]
Pluck stout men's pillows from below their heads:[5]
This yellow slave
Will knit and break religions; bless the accurs'd;
Make the hoar leprosy[6] ador'd; place thieves,
And give them title, knee, and approbation,
With senators on the bench: this is it,[7]
That makes the wappen'd widow wed again;[8]

"Then Collatine again by Lucrece' side,
"In his *clear* bed might have reposed still."
i. e. his *uncontaminated* bed. *Steevens.*
See p. 373. *Malone.*

[4] —— —— *Why this*
Will lug your priests and servants from your sides;] Aristophanes, in his *Plutus*, Act V, sc. ii, makes the priest of Jupiter desert his service to live with Plutus. *Warburton.*

[5] *Pluck* stout *men's pillows from below their heads:*] i. e. men who have strength yet remaining to struggle with their distemper. This alludes to an old custom of drawing away the pillow from under the heads of men in their last agonies, to make their departure the easier. But the Oxford editor, supposing *stout* to signify *healthy*, alters it to *sick*, and this he calls emending. *Warburton.*

[6] —— *the hoar leprosy* —] So, in P. Holland's translation of Pliny's *Natural History*, Book XXVIII, ch. xii: "— the *foul white leprie* called *elephantiasis*." *Steevens.*

[7] —— *this is it,*] Some word is here wanting to the metre. We might either repeat the pronoun—*this;* or avail ourselves of our author's common introductory adverb, emphatically used—
—— why, *this it is.* *Steevens.*

[8] *That makes the* wappen'd *widow wed again;*] *Waped* or *wappen'd* signifies both sorrowful and terrified, either for the loss of a good husband, or by the treatment of a bad. But gold, he says, can overcome both her affection and her fears. *Warburton.*

Of *wappened* I have found no example, nor know any meaning. To *awhape* is used by Spenser in his *Hubberd's Tale*, but I think not in either of the senses mentioned. I would read *wained*, for *decayed by time*. So, our author, in *King Richard III:*
"A beauty-*waining*, and distressed widow." *Johnson.*

In the comedy of *The Roaring Girl*, by Middleton and Decker, 1611, I meet with a word very like this, which the reader will easily explain for himself, when he has seen the following passage:

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She, whom the spital-house, and ulcerous sores

"*Moll.* And there you shall *wap* with me.
"*Sir B.* Nay, *Moll*, what 's that *wap?*
"*Moll. Wappening* and niggling is all one, the rogue my man can tell you."

Again, in Ben Jonson's Masque of *Gypsies Metamorphosed:*

"Boarded at Tappington,
"*Bedded* at *Wap*pington."

Again, in *Martin Mark-all's Apologie to the Bel-man of London*, 1610: "*Niggling* is company-keeping with a woman: this word is not used now, but *wapping*, and thereof comes the name *wapping*-morts for whores." Again, in one of the *Paston Letters*, Vol. IV, p. 417: "Deal courteously with the Queen, &c. and with Mrs. Anne Hawte for *wappys*" &c.

It must not, however, be concealed, that Chaucer, in *The Complaint of Annelida*, line 217, uses the word with the sense in which Dr. Warburton explains it:

"My sewertye in *waped* countenance."

Wappened, according to the quotations I have already given, would mean—*The widow whose curiosity and passions had been already gratified.* So, in *Hamlet:*

"The instances that second marriage move,
"Are base respects of *thrift*, but none of *love*."

And if the word *defunct*, in *Othello*, be explained according to its primitive meaning, the same sentiment may be discovered there. There may, however, be some corruption in the text. After all, I had rather read—*weeping* widow. So, in the ancient bl. l. ballad entitled, *The little Barley Corne:*

"'Twill make a *weeping widow* laugh,
"And soon incline to pleasure." *Steevens.*

The instances produced by Mr. Steevens fully support the text in my apprehension, nor do I suspect any corruption. *Unwapper'd* is used by Fletcher in *The Two Noble Kinsmen*, for *fresh*, the opposite of *stale;* and perhaps we should read there *unwappen'd.*

Mr. Steevens's interpretation however, is, I think, not quite exact, because it appears to me likely to mislead the reader with respect to the general import of the passage. Shakspeare means not to account for the wappen'd widow's *seeking a* husband (though "her *curiosity* has been *gratified*,") but for her *finding* one. It is her gold, says he, that induced some one (more attentive to *thrift* than *love*) to *accept* in marriage the hand of the *experienced* and *o'er-worn* widow.—*Wed* is here used for *wedded.* So, in *The Comedy of Errors*, Act I, sc. i:

"In Syracusa was I born, and *wed*
"Unto a woman, happy but for me."

If *wed* is used as a verb, the words mean, *that effects or produces her second marriage* *Malone.*

Mr. Tyrwhitt explains *wap'd*, in the line cited from Chaucer, by *stupified;* a sense which accords with the other instances adduced

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Would cast the gorge at,[9] this embalms and spices

by Mr. Steevens, as well as with Shakspeare. The *wappen'd* widow, is one who is no longer alive to those pleasures, the desire of which was her first inducement to marry. *Henley.*

I suspect that there is another error in this passage, which has escaped the notice of the editors, and that we should read—"*woo'd* again," instead of "*wed* again." That a woman should *wed* again, however wapper'd, [or wappen'd] is nothing extraordinary. The extraordinary circumstance is, that she should be *woo'd* again, and become an object of desire. *M Mason.*

9 *She, whom the spital-house, and ulcerous sores*
Would cast the gorge at,] Surely we ought to read:
She, whose ulcerous sores the spital house
Would cast the gorge at, ——.
Or, should the first line be thought deficient in harmony—
She, at whose *ulcerous sores the spital-house*
Would cast the gorge up, ——.
The old reading is nonsense.

I must add, that Dr. Farmer joins with me in suspecting this passage to be corrupt, and is satisfied with the emendation I have proposed. *Steevens.*

In *Antony and Cleopatra*, we have *honour and death*, for *honourable death*. "The spital-house and ulcerous sores," therefore may be used for *the contaminated spital-house*; the spital-house replete with ulcerous sores. If it be asked, how can the spital-house, or how can ulcerous sores, *cast the gorge* at the female here described, let the following passages answer the question:

"Heaven stops the *nose* at it, and the moon *winks*." *Othello.*

Again, in *Hamlet:*

"Whose *spirit*, with divine ambition puff'd,
"*Makes mouths* at the invisible event."

Again, in *The Merchant of Venice:*

"—— when the bag-pipe sings i' the *nose*, —."

Again, in the play before us:

"—— when our vaults have *wept*
"With drunken spilth of wine ——."

In the preceding page, all *sores* are said to lay *siege* to nature; which they can no more do, if the passage is to be understood literally, than they can *cast the gorge* at the sight of the person here described.—In a word, the diction of the text is so very Shakspearian, that I cannot but wonder it should be suspected of corruption.

The meaning is,—Her whom the spital-house, however polluted, would not admit, but reject with abhorrence, this embalms, &c. or, (in looser paraphrase) Her, at the sight of whom all the patients in the spital-house, however contaminated, would sicken and turn away with loathing and abhorrence, disgusted by the view of still greater pollution, than any they had yet experience of, this embalms and spices, &c.

To "cast the gorge *at*," was Shakspeare's phraseology. So, in

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To the April day again.[1] Come, damned earth,
Thou common whore of mankind, that put'st odds
Among the rout of nations, I will make thee
Do thy right nature.[2]—[*March afar off.*]—Ha! a drum?
—Thou 'rt quick,[3]
But yet I 'll bury thee: Thou 'lt go, strong thief[4]
When gouty keepers of thee cannot stand:—
Nay, stay thou out for earnest. [*Keeping some Gold.*

Enter ALCIBIADES, *with Drum and Fife, in warlike manner;* PHRYNIA, *and* TYMANDRA.

Alcib. What art thou there?
Speak.

Tim. A beast, as thou art. The canker gnaw thy heart,
For showing me again the eyes of man!

Alcib. What is thy name? Is man so hateful to thee,
That art thyself a man?

Tim. I am *misanthropos*,[5] and hate mankind.
For thy part, I do wish thou wert a dog,
That I might love thee something.

Alcib. I know thee well;

Hamlet, Act V, sc. i: "How abhorr'd in my imagination it is! my *gorge* rises *at* it." *Malone.*

[1] *To the* April *day again.*] That is, *to the wedding day*, called by the poet, satirically, *April day*, or *fool's day*. *Johnson.*

The *April day* does not relate to *the widow*, but to the other *diseased female*, who is represented as the *outcast of an hospital*. She it is whom gold *embalms and spices* to the *April day again*: i. e. gold restores her to all the *freshness and sweetness* of youth. Such is the power of gold, that it will—

"—— make black, white; foul, fair;
"Wrong, right;" &c.

Shakspeare's Sonnet entitled *Love's Cruelty*, has the same thought:

"Thou art thy mother's glass, and she in thee
"Calls back the lovely *April* of her prime." *Tollet.*

[2] *Do thy right nature.*] Lie in the earth where nature laid thee. *Johnson.*

[3] —— *Thou 'rt quick,*] Thou hast life and motion in thee. *Johnson.*

[4] —— *strong thief,*] Thus Chaucer, in the *Pardoner's Tale:*

"Men wodden say that we were *theeves strong*." *Steevens.*

[5] *I am* misanthropos,] A marginal note in the old translation of Plutarch's *Life of Antony*, furnished our author with this epithet: "Antonius followeth the life and example of Timon *Misanthropus*, the Athenian." *Malone.*

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But in thy fortunes am unlearn'd and strange.

Tim. I know thee too; and more, than that I know thee,
I not desire to know. Follow thy drum;
With man's blood paint the ground, gules, gules:[6]
Religious canons, civil laws are cruel;
Then what should war be? This fell whore of thine
Hath in her more destruction than thy sword,
For all her cherubin look.

Phry. Thy lips rot off!

Tim. I will not kiss thee;[7] then the rot returns
To thine own lips again.

Alcib. How came the noble Timon to this change?

Tim. As the moon does, by wanting light to give:
But then renew I could not, like the moon;
There were no suns to borrow of.

Alcib. Noble Timon,
What friendship may I do thee?

Tim. None, but to
Maintain my opinion.

Alcib. What is it, Timon?

Tim. Promise me friendship, but perform none: If
Thou wilt not promise,[8] the gods plague thee, for
Thou art a man! if thou dost perform, confound thee,
For thou 'rt a man!

Alcib. I have heard in some sort of thy miseries.

Tim. Thou saw'st them, when I had prosperity.

[6] —— *gules, gules:*] Might we not repair the defective metre of this line, by adopting a Shakspearian epithet, and reading—

——— *gules,* total *gules;*

as in the following passage in *Hamlet:*

"Now is he *total* gules." *Steevens.*

[7] *I will not kiss thee;*] This alludes to an opinion in former times, generally prevalent, that the venereal infection transmitted to another, left the infecter free. I will not, says Timon, take the rot from thy lips, by kissing thee. *Johnson.*

Thus, *The Humorous Lieutenant* says:

"He has some wench, or such a toy, to kiss over,
"Before he go: 'would I had such another,
"*To draw this foolish pain down.*"

See also the fourth Satire of Donne. *Steevens.*

[8] ——— ——— *If*
Thou wilt not promise, &c.] That is, however thou may'st act, since thou art a man, hated man, I wish thee evil. *Johnson.*

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Alcib. I see them now; then was a blessed time.[9]

Tim. As thine is now, held with a brace of harlots.

Timan. Is this the Athenian minion, whom the world Voic'd so regardfully?

Tim. Art thou Timandra?

Timan. Yes.

Tim. Be a whore still! they love thee not, that use thee;
Give them diseases, leaving with thee their lust.
Make use of thy salt hours: season the slaves
For tubs, and baths;[1] bring down rose-cheeked youth[2]
To the tub-fast, and the diet.[3]

[9] —— then *was a blessed time.*] I suspect, from Timon's answer, that Shakspeare wrote—*thine* was a blessed time. *Malone.*

I apprehend no corruption. *Now*, and *then*, were designedly opposed to each other. *Steevens.*

[1] *Be a whore still! they love thee not, that use thee;*
Give them diseases, leaving with thee their lust.
Make use of thy salt hours: &c.] There is here a slight transposition. I would read:

—— *they love thee not that use thee.*
Leaving with thee their lust; give them diseases,
Make use of thy salt hours, season the slaves
For tubs, and baths; ——. *Johnson.*

[2] —— *bring down* rose-cheeked *youth* —] This expressive epithet our author might have found in Marlowe's *Hero and Leander:*

"*Rose-cheek'd* Adonis kept a solemn feast." *Malone.*

[3] *To the* tub-fast, *and the diet.*] [Old copy—*fub-fast.*] One might make a very long and vain search, yet not be able to meet with this preposterous word *fub-fast*, which has notwithstanding passed current with all the editors. We should read—*tub-fast.* The author is alluding to the lues venerea and its effects. At that time the cure of it was performed either by guaiacum, or mercurial unctions: and in both cases the patient was kept up very warm and close; that in the first application the sweat might be promoted; and lest, in the other, he should take cold, which was fatal. "The regimen for the course of guaiacum (says Dr. Friend, in his *History of Physick*, Vol. II, p. 380,) was at first strangely circumstantial; and so rigorous, that the patient was put into a dungeon in order to make him sweat; and in that manner, as Fallopius expresses it, the bones, and the very man himself was macerated." Wiseman says, in England they used a *tub* for this purpose, as abroad, a cave, or oven, or dungeon. And as for the unction, it was sometimes continued for thirty-seven days, (as he observes, p. 375,) and during this time there was necessarily an extraordinary *abstinence* required. Hence the term of the *tub-fast.* *Warburton.*

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Timan. Hang thee, monster!
Alcib. Pardon him, sweet Timandra; for his wits
Are drown'd and lost in his calamities.—
I have but little gold of late, brave Timon,
The want whereof doth daily make revolt
In my penurious band: I have heard, and griev'd,
How cursed Athens, mindless of thy worth,
Forgetting thy great deeds, when neighbour states,
But for thy sword and fortune, trod upon them,[4] —
Tim. I pr'ythee, beat thy drum, and get thee gone.
Alcib. I am thy friend, and pity thee, dear Timon.
Tim. How dost thou pity him, whom thou dost trouble?
I had rather be alone.
Alcib. Why, fare thee well:
Here 's some gold for thee.
Tim. Keep 't, I cannot eat it.
Alcib. When I have laid proud Athens on a heap, —
Tim. Warr'st thou 'gainst Athens?
Alcib. Ay, Timon, and have cause.
Tim. The gods confound them all i' thy conquest; and
Thee after, when thou hast conquer'd!
Alcib. Why me, Timon?
Tim. That,
By killing villains, thou wast born to conquer
My country.
Put up thy gold; Go on,—here 's gold,—go on;
Be as a planetary plague, when Jove

In the Latin comedy of *Cornelianum Dolium*, which was probably written by T Randolph, there is a frontispiece representing the sweating-tub, which from the name of the unfortunate patient, was afterwards called *Cornelius's tub*, as appears from the Dictionaries of Cotgrave and Howel. Some account of the sweating-tub with a cut of it may be seen in Ambrose Paræus's Works, by Johnson, p. 48 Another very particular representation of it may be likewise found in the *Recueil de Proverbes par Jacques Lagniet*, with the following lines:

"Pour un petit plaisir je soufre mille maux;
"Je fais contre un hyver deux este ci me semble:
"Partout le corps je sue, et ma machoir tremble;
"Je ne croy jamais voir la fin de mes travaux."

For another print of this tub, see Holmes's *Academy of Armory*. *Douce.*

4 —— *trod upon them,*] Sir Thomas Hanmer reads—had *trod upon them*. Shakspeare was not thus minutely accurate. *Malone.*

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Will o'er some high-vic'd city hang his poison
In the sick air:[5] Let not thy sword skip one:
Pity not honour'd age for his white beard,
He 's an usurer: Strike me the counterfeit matron;
It is her habit only that is honest,
Herself 's a bawd: Let not the virgin's cheek
Make soft thy trenchant sword;[6] for those milk-paps,
That through the window-bars bore at men's eyes,[7]

[5] *Be as a planetary plague, when Jove*
Will o'er some high-vic'd city hang his poison
In the sick air:] This is wonderfully sublime and picturesque. *Warburton.*

We meet with the same image in *King Richard II:*

" ——— ——— or suppose
" Devouring *pestilence hangs* in our *air*." *Malone.*

The same idea occurs in Chapman's version of the sixth *Iliad:*

" ——— and therefore *hangs*, I fear,
"*A plague above* him." *Steevens.*

[6] —— *thy* trenchant *sword;*] So, in Philemon Holland's translation of the ninth Book of Pliny's *Natural History*, 1601, p. 237: " — they all to cut and hacke them with their *trenchant* teeth; —." See note on *Macbeth*, Vol. VII. *Steevens.*

[7] *That through the window-bars bore at men's eyes,*] The virgin that shows her bosom through the lattice of her chamber, *Johnson.*

Dr Johnson's explanation is almost confirmed by the following passage in *Cymbeline:*

" —— or let her beauty
" *Look through a* casement *to allure false hearts,*
" And be false with them."

Shakspeare at the same time might aim a stroke at this indecency in the wantons of his own time, which is also animadverted on by several contemporary dramatists. So, in the ancient interlude of *The Repentance of Marie Magdalene*, 1567:

" Your garment must be worne alway,
" That your *white pappes* may be seene if you may.—
" If young gentlemen may see your white skin,
" It will allure them to love, and soon bring them in.
" Both damsels and wives use many such feates.
" I know them that will lay out their *faire teates.*"

All this is addressed to Mary Magdalen. *Steevens.*

I do not believe any particular satire was here intended. Lady Suffolk, Lady Somerset, and many of the celebrated beauties of the time of James I, are thus represented in their pictures; nor were they, I imagine, thought more reprehensible than the ladies of the present day, who from the same extravagant pursuit of what is called fashion, run into an opposite extreme. *Malone.*

I have not hitherto met with any ancient portrait of a modest

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Are not within the leaf of pity writ,
Set them down[8] horrible traitors: Spare not the babe,
Whose dimpled smiles from fools exhaust their mercy;[9]
Think it a bastard,[1] whom the oracle
Hath doubtfully pronounc'd thy throat[2] shall cut,
And mince it sans remorse: Swear against objects;
Put armour on thine ears, and on thine eyes;
Whose proof, nor yells of mothers, maids, nor babes,
Nor sight of priests in holy vestments bleeding,
Shall pierce a jot. There 's gold to pay thy soldiers:
Make large confusion; and, thy fury spent,
Confounded be thyself! Speak not, be gone.

Alcib. Hast thou gold yet? I 'll take the gold thou giv'st me,
Not all thy counsel.

Tim. Dost thou, or dost thou not, heaven's curse upon thee!

English woman, in which the *papillæ exertæ* were exhibited as described on the present occasion by Shakspeare; for he alludes not only to what he has called in his celebrated Song, "the hills of snow," but to the "pinks that grow" upon their summits. *Steevens.*

I believe we should read nearly thus:

—— nor *those milk-paps,*
That through the widow's barb *bore at men's eyes,*
Are not within the leaf of pity writ.

The use of the doubled negative is so common in Shakspeare, that it is unnecessary to support it by instances. The *barbe*, I believe, was a kind of *veil*. Cressida, in Chaucer, who appears as a *widow*, is described as wearing a *barbe*. *Troilus and Cressida*, Book II, v. 110, in which place Caxton's edition (as I learn from the Glossary) reads—*wimple*, which certainly signifies a *veil*, and was probably substituted as a synonymous word for *barbe*, the more antiquated reading of the manuscripts. *Unbarbed* is used by Shakspeare for *uncovered*, in *Coriolanus*, Act III, sc. v:

"Must I go show them my *unbarbed* sconce?"

See also Leland's *Collectanea*, Vol. V, p. 317, new edit. where the ladies, mourning at the funeral of Queen Mary, are mentioned as having *their barbes above their chinnes*. *Tyrwhitt.*

[8] *Set them down* —] Old copy, in defiance of metre—
But *set them down*. *Steevens.*

[9] —— exhaust *their mercy;*] For *exhaust*, Sir Thomas Hanmer, and after him Dr. Warburton, read—*extort;* but *exhaust* here signifies literally to *draw forth*. *Johnson.*

[1] —— *bastard,*] An allusion to the tale of Oedipus. *Johnson.*

[2] —— thy *throat* —] Old copy—*the* throat. Corrected by Mr. Pope. *Malone.*

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Phr. & Timan. Give us some gold, good Timon: Hast thou more?

Tim. Enough to make a whore forswear her trade,
And to make whores, a bawd.[3] Hold up, you sluts, *abhorred*
Your aprons mountant: You are not oathable,—
Although, I know, you 'll swear, terribly swear,
Into strong shudders, and to heavenly agues,
The immortal gods that hear you,[4]—spare your oaths,
I 'll trust to your conditions:[5] Be whores still;
And he whose pious breath seeks to convert you,
Be strong in whore, allure him, burn him up;
Let your close fire predominate his smoke,
And be no turncoats:[6] Yet may your pains, six months,
Be quite contrary:[7] And thatch your poor thin roofs[8]

[3] *And to make* whores, *a bawd.*] That is, enough to make a whore leave whoring, and a bawd leave making whores. *Johnson.*

[4] *The immortal gods that hear you,*] The same thought is found in *Antony and Cleopatra*, Act I, sc. iii:

"Though you with swearing *shake the throned gods.*"

Again, in *The Winter's Tale:*

"Though you would seek to unsphere the stars with oaths."

Steevens.

[5] *I 'll trust to your conditions:*] You need not swear to continue whores, I will trust to your inclinations. *Johnson.*

See Vol. IX, p. 374, n. 9. *Malone.*

Timon, I believe, does not mean their *dispositions* but their *vocations*, and accordingly conjures them *to be whores still.*

M. Mason.

[6] *And be no turncoats:*] By an old statute, those women who lived in a state of prostitution, were, among other articles concerning their dress, enjoined to wear their garments, with the *wrong-side outward*, on pain of forfeiting them. Perhaps there is in this passage a reference to it. *Henley.*

I do not perceive how this explanation of—*turncoat*, will accord with Timon's train of reasoning; yet the antiquary may perhaps derive satisfaction from that which affords no assistance to the commentator. *Steevens.*

[7] *Yet may your* pains, *six months,*
Be quite contrary:] This is obscure, partly from the ambiguity of the word *pains*, and partly from the generality of the expression. The meaning is this: he had said before, follow constantly your trade of debauchery: that is (says he) for six months in the year. Let the other six be employed in quite contrary pains and labour, namely, in the severe discipline necessary for the repair of those disorders that your debaucheries occasion, in order to fit you anew to the trade; and thus let the whole year be spent in

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With burdens of the dead;—some that were hang'd,

these different occupations. On this account he goes on, and says, *Make false hair*, &c. *Warburton.*

The explanation is ingenious, but I think it very remote, and would willingly bring the author and his readers to meet on easier terms. We may read:

——*Yet may your pains six months*
Be quite contraried: —.

Timon is wishing ill to mankind, but is afraid lest the whores should imagine that he wishes well to them; to obviate which he lets them know, that he imprecates upon them influence enough to plague others, and disappointments enough to plague themselves. He wishes that they may do all possible mischief, and yet take *pains six months* of the year in vain.

In this sense there is a connection of this line with the next. Finding *your pains contraried*, try new expedients, *thatch your thin roofs*, and paint.

To *contrary* is an old verb. Latimer relates, that when he went to court, he was advised not to *contrary* the King. *Johnson.*

If Dr. Johnson's explanation be right, which I do not believe, the present words appear to me to admit it, as well as the reading he would introduce. Such unnecessary deviations from the text should ever be avoided. Dr. Warburton's is a very natural interpretation, which cannot often be said of the expositions of that commentator. The words that follow fully support it: "And thatch your poor thin roofs," &c. i. e. after you have lost the greater part of your hair by disease, and the medicines that for six months you have been obliged to take, then procure an artificial covering, &c. *Malone.*

I believe this means,—Yet for half the year at least, may you suffer such punishment as is inflicted on harlots in houses of correction. *Steevens.*

These words should be inclosed in a parenthesis. Johnson wishes to connect them with the following sentences, but that cannot be, as they contain an imprecation, and the following lines contain an instruction. Timon is giving instructions to those women; but, in the middle of his instructions, his misanthropy breaks forth in an imprecation against them. I have no objection to the reading of *contraried*, instead of *contrary*, but it does not seem to be necessary. *M. Mason.*

[8] ——*thatch your poor thin roofs* &c.] About the year 1595, when the fashion became general in England of wearing a greater quantity of hair than was ever the produce of a single head, it was dangerous for any child to wander, as nothing was more common than for women to entice such as had fine locks into private places, and there to cut them off. I have this information from Stubbes's *Anatomie of Abuses*, which I have often quoted on the article of dress. To this fashion the writers of Shakspeare's age do not appear to have been reconciled. So, in *A Mad World my Masters*,

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No matter:—wear them, betray with them: whore still;
Paint till a horse may mire upon your face:
A pox of wrinkles!

Phr. & Tim. Well, more gold;—What then?—
Believe 't, that we 'll do any thing for gold.

Tim. Consumptions sow
In hollow bones of man; strike their sharp shins,
And mar men's spurring.[9] Crack the lawyer's voice,
That he may never more false title plead,
Nor sound his quillets shrilly:[1] hoar the flamen,[2]

1608: "—to wear perriwigs made of *another's hair*, is not this against kind?"

Again, in Drayton's *Mooncalf:*

"And with large sums they stick not to procure
"*Hair from the dead*, yea, and the most unclean;
"To help their pride they nothing will disdain."

Again, in Shakspeare's 68th Sonnet:

"Before the golden tresses of the dead,
"The right of sepulchres, were shorn away,
"To live a second life on second head,
"Ere *beauty's dead fleece* made another gay."

Again, in Churchyard's *Tragicall Discours of a dolorous Gentlewoman*, 1593:

"The *perwickes* fine must curle wher haire doth lack
"The swelling grace that fils the empty sacke."

Warner, in his *Albion's England*, 1602, Book IX, ch. xlvii, is likewise very severe on this fashion. Stowe informs us, that "women's *periwigs* were first brought into England about the time of the massacre of Paris." *Steevens.*

[9] ——*men's* spurring.] Sir Thomas Hanmer reads—*sparring*, properly enough, if there be any ancient example of the word. *Johnson.*

Spurring is certainly right. The disease that enfeebled their *shins* would have this effect. *Steevens.*

[1] *Nor sound his* quillets *shrilly:*] *Quillets* are subtilties. So, in *Law Tricks*, &c. 1608: "—a *quillet* well applied!" *Steevens.*

Cole, in his *Latin Dictionary*, 1679, renders *quillet, res frivola. recula. Malone.*

[2] ——hoar *the flamen,*] Mr. Upton would read—*hoarse*, i. e. make hoarse; for to be *hoary* claims reverence. "Add to this (says he) that *hoarse* is here most proper, as opposed to *scolds*. It may, however, mean,—Give the flamen the *hoary leprosy*." So, in Webster's *Duchess of Malfy*, 1623:

"——shew like *leprosy*,
"The *whiter* the fouler."

And before, in this play:

"Make the *hoar leprosy* ador'd." *Steevens.*

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That scolds against the quality of flesh,
And not believes himself: down with the nose,
Down with it flat; take the bridge quite away
Of him, that his particular to foresee,[3]
Smells from the general weal: make curl'd-pate ruffians bald;
And let the unscarr'd braggarts of the war
Derive some pain from you: Plague all;
That your activity may defeat and quell
The source of all erection.—There 's more gold:—
Do you damn others, and let this damn you,
And ditches grave you all![4]

Phr. & Timan. More counsel with more money, bounteous Timon.

Tim. More whore, more mischief first; I have given you earnest.

Alcib. Strike up the drum towards Athens. Farewel, Timon;

[3] —— *that his particular to* foresee,] The metaphor is apparently incongruous, but the sense is good. To *foresee his particular*, is *to provide for his private advantage*, for which *he leaves the right scent of publick good*. In hunting, when hares have cross'd one another, it is common for some of the hounds *to smell from the general weal, and foresee their own particular*. Shakspeare, who seems to have been a skilful sportsman, and has alluded often to falconry, perhaps, alludes here to hunting. [Dr. Warburton would read—fore*fend*, i. e. (as he interprets the word) provide for, secure.]

To the commentator's emendation it may be objected, that he uses *forefend* in the wrong meaning. To *forefend* is, I think, never to *provide for*, but to *provide against*. The verbs compounded with *for* or *fore* have commonly either an evil or negative sense. *Johnson.*

[4] *And ditches* grave *you all!*] To *grave* is to entomb. The word is now obsolete, though sometimes used by Shakspeare and his contemporary authors. So, in Lord Surrey's translation of the fourth book of Virgil's *Æneid:*

"Cinders (think'st thou) mind this? or *graved* ghostes?"

Again, in Chapman's version of the fifteenth *Iliad:*

"—— the throtes of dogs shall *grave*
"His manlesse lims."

To *ungrave* was likewise to turn out of a grave. Thus, in Marston's *Sophonisba:*

"—— —— and me, now dead,
"Deny a grave; hurl us among the rocks
"To stanch beasts hunger: therefore, thus *ungrav'd*,
"I seek slow rest." *Steevens.*

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If I thrive well, I 'll visit thee again.
Tim. If I hope well, I 'll never see thee more.
Alcib. I never did thee harm.
Tim. Yes, thou spok'st well of me.[5]
Alcib. Call'st thou that harm?
Tim. Men daily find it such.[6] Get thee away,
And take thy beagles with thee.
Alcib. We but offend him.—
Strike. [*Drum beats. Exeunt* ALCIB. PHR. *and* TIMAN.
Tim. That nature, being sick of man's unkindness,
Should yet be hungry!—Common mother, thou,
[*Digging.*
Whose womb unmeasurable, and infinite breast,[7]
Teems, and feeds all; whose self-same mettle,
Whereof thy proud child, arrogant man, is puff'd,
Engenders the black toad, and adder blue,
The gilded newt, and eyeless venom'd worm,[8]
With all the abhorred births below crisp heaven[9]

[5] *Yes, thou spok'st well of me.*] Shakspeare in this as in many other places, appears to allude to the sacred writings: "Woe unto him of whom all men speak well!" *Malone.*

[6] ——*find it* such.] For the insertion of the pronoun—*such*, I am answerable. It is too frequently used on similar occasions by our author, to need exemplification. *Steevens.*

[7] *Whose womb unmeasurable, and infinite breast,*] This image is taken from the ancient statues of Diana Ephesia Multimammia, called παναίολος φύσις πάντων μήτηρ; and is a very good comment on those extraordinary figures. See Montfaucon, *l'Antiquité expliquée* Lib. III, ch. xv. Hesiod, alluding to the same representations, calls the earth, ΓΑΙ' ΕΥΡΥΣΤΕΡΝΟΣ. *Warburton.*

Whose infinite breast means no more than *whose boundless surface.* Shakspeare probably knew nothing of the statue to which the commentator alludes. *Steevens.*

[8] —— *eyeless venom'd worm,*] The serpent, which we, from the smallness of his eyes, call the *blind-worm*, and the Latins, *cæcilia.* *Johnson.*

So, in *Macbeth:*
"Adder's fork, and *blindworm's* sting." *Steevens.*

[9] —— *below* crisp *heaven*—] We should read—*cript*, i. e. vaulted, from the Latin *crypta*, a vault. *Warburton.*

Mr Upton declares for *crisp*, curled, bent, hollow. *Johnson.*

Perhaps Shakspeare means *curl'd*, from the appearance of the clouds. In *The Tempest*, Ariel talks of riding—
"On the *curl'd* clouds."

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Whereon Hyperion's quickening fire doth shine;
Yield him, who all thy human sons doth hate,[1]
From forth thy plenteous bosom, one poor root!
Ensear thy fertile and conceptious womb,[2]
Let it no more bring out ingrateful man![3]
Go great with tigers, dragons, wolves, and bears;
Teem with new monsters, whom thy upward face
Hath to the marbled mansion[4] all above
Never presented!—O, a root,—Dear thanks!
meadows Dry up thy marrows, vines, and plough-torn leas;[5]
Whereof ingrateful man, with liquorish draughts,
And morsels unctuous, greases his pure mind,

Chaucer, in his *House of Fame*, says—
"Her here that was *oundie* and *crips*."
i. e. *wavy* and *curled*.
Again, in *The Philosopher's Satires*, by Robert Anton:
"Her face as beauteous as the *crisped* morn." *Steevens.*

[1] —— *who all* thy *human sons* doth *hate*,] Old copy—*the* human sons *do* hate. The former word was corrected by Mr. Pope; the latter by Mr. Rowe. *Malone.*

[2] Ensear *thy fertile and conceptious womb.*] So, in *King Lear:*
"*Dry up* in her the organs of encrease." *Steevens.*

[3] *Let it no more* bring out *ingrateful man!*] It is plain that *bring out* is *bring forth*. *Johnson.*

Neither Dr. Warburton nor Dr. Johnson seems to have been aware of the import of this passage. It was the great boast of the Athenians that they were αυτοχθονες; *sprung from the soil on which they lived;* and it is in allusion to this, that the terms *common mother*, and *bring out*, are applied to the *ground*. *Henley.*

Though Mr. Henley, as a scholar, could not be unacquainted with this Athenian boast, I fear that Shakspeare knew no more of it than of the many-breasted Diana of Ephesus, brought forward by Dr. Warburton in a preceding note. *Steevens.*

[4] —— *the* marbled *mansion*—] So, Milton, B. III, l. 564:
"Through the pure *marble* air ——."
Virgil bestows the same epithet on the sea. *Steevens.*
Again, in *Othello:*
"Now by yon *marble* heaven, ——." *Malone.*

[5] *Dry up thy* marrows, *vines, and plow-torn leas;*] The sense is this: *O nature! cease* to *produce men, ensear thy womb;* but if thou wilt continue to produce them, at least cease to pamper them; *dry up thy marrows*, on which they fatten with *unctuous morsels*, thy *vines*, which give them *liquorish draughts*, and thy *plow-torn leas*. Here are effects corresponding with causes, *liquorish draughts*, with *vines*, and *unctuous morsels* with *marrows*, and the old reading literally preserved. *Johnson.*

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That from it all consideration slips!

Enter APEMANTUS.

More man? Plague! plague!

Apem. I was directed hither: Men report,
Thou dost affect my manners, and dost use them.

Tim. 'Tis then, because thou dost not keep a dog
Whom I would imitate: Consumption catch thee!

Apem. This is in thee a nature but affected;
A poor unmanly melancholy, sprung
From change of fortune.[6] Why this spade? this place?
This slave-like habit? and these looks of care?
Thy flatterers yet wear silk, drink wine, lie soft;
Hug their diseas'd perfumes,[7] and have forgot
That ever Timon was. Shame not these woods,
By putting on the cunning of a carper.[8]
Be thou a flatterer now, and seek to thrive
By that which has undone thee: hinge thy knee,[9]
And let his very breath, whom thou 'lt observe,
Blow off thy cap; praise his most vicious strain,
And call it excellent: Thou wast told thus;
Thou gav'st thine ears, like tapsters, that bid welcome,[1]

[6] *This is in thee a nature but* affected;
A poor unmanly melancholy, sprung
From change of fortune.] The old copy reads *infected*, and *change of* future. Mr. Rowe made the emendation. *Malone.*

[7] *Hug their diseas'd* perfumes,] i. e. their diseas'd perfumed mistresses. *Malone.*

So, in *Othello:*

"'Tis such another fitchew; marry, a *perfum'd* one." *Steevens.*

[8] —— *the* cunning of a carper.] For the philosophy of a Cynick, of which sect Apemantus was; and therefore he concludes:

"Do not assume my likeness." *Warburton.*

Cunning here seems to signify *counterfeit appearance.* *Johnson.*

The *cunning of a carper*, is the insidious art of a critick. Shame not these woods, says Apemantus, by coming here to find fault. *Maurice Kyffin* in the preface to his translation of Terence's *Andria*, 1588, says: "Of the *curious carper* I look not to be favoured." Again, *Ursula*, speaking of the sarcasms of *Beatrice*, observes—

"Why sure, such *carping* is not commendable."

There is no apparent reason why Apemantus (according to Dr. Warburton's explanation) should ridicule his own sect. *Steevens.*

[9] —— *hinge thy knee,*] Thus, in *Hamlet:*

"To crook the pregnant *hinges* of the *knee*." *Steevens.*

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To knaves, and all approachers: 'Tis most just,
That thou turn rascal; had'st thou wealth again,
Rascals should have 't. Do not assume my likeness.

Tim. Were I like thee, I 'd throw away myself.

Apem. Thou hast cast away thyself, being like thyself;
A madman so long, now a fool: What, think'st
That the bleak air, thy boisterous chamberlain,
Will put thy shirt on warm? Will these moss'd trees,[2]
That have outliv'd the eagle,[3] page thy heels,
And skip when thou point'st out? Will the cold brook,
Candied with ice, caudle thy morning taste,
To cure thy o'er-night's surfeit? call the creatures,—
Whose naked natures live in all the spite
Of wreakful heaven; whose bare unhoused trunks,
To the conflicting elements expos'd,
Answer mere nature,[4]—bid them flatter thee;

[1] —— *like tapsters, that* bid *welcome,*] So, in our author's *Venus and Adonis:*

"Like shrill-tongu'd tapsters answering every call,
"Soothing the humour of fantastick wits."

The old copy has—*bad* welcome. Corrected in the second folio. *Malone.*

[2] —— moss'd *trees,*] [Old copy—*moist* trees.] Sir T. Hanmer reads very elegantly:

——— moss'd *trees.* *Johnson.*

Shakspeare uses the same epithet in *As you Like it,* Act IV:

"Under an oak, whose boughs were *moss'd* with age."
Steevens.

So also, Drayton, in his *Mortimeriados,* no date:

"Even as a bustling tempest rousing blasts
"Upon a forest of old branching oakes,
"And with his furie teyrs their *mossy* loaks."

Moss'd is, I believe, the true reading. *Malone.*

I have inserted this reading in the text, because there is less propriety in the epithet—*moist;* it being a known truth that trees become more and more *dry,* as they encrease in age. Thus, our author, in his *Rape of Lucrece,* observes, that it is one of the properties of time—

"To *dry* the *old* oak's sap ——." *Steevens.*

[3] —— *outliv'd the eagle,*] *Aquilæ Senectus* is a proverb. I learn from Turberville's *Book of Falconry,* 1575, that the great age of this bird has been ascertained from the circumstance of its always building its *eyrie,* or nest, in the same place *Steevens.*

[4] *Answer* mere nature,] So, in *King Lear,* Act II, sc. iii:

"And with presented nakedness outface
"The winds," &c. *Steevens.*

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O! thou shalt find——
Tim. A fool of thee: Depart.
Apem. I love thee better now than e'er I did.
Tim. I hate thee worse.
Apem. Why?
Tim. Thou flatter'st misery.
Apem. I flatter not; but say, thou art a caitiff.
Tim. Why dost thou seek me out?
Apem. To vex thee.[5]
Tim. Always a villain's office, or a fool's.
Dost please thyself in 't?
Apem. Ay.
Tim. What! a knave too?[6]
Apem. If thou didst put this sour-cold habit on
To castigate thy pride, 'twere well: but thou
Dost it enforcedly; thou 'dst courtier be again,
Wert thou not beggar. Willing misery
Outlives incertain pomp, is crown'd before:[7]
The one is filling still, never complete;
The other, at high wish: Best state, contentless,
Hath a distracted and most wretched being,
Worse than the worst, content.[8]

[5] *To vex thee.*] As the measure is here imperfect, we may suppose, with Sir Thomas Hanmer, our author to have written:
Only *to vex thee.* *Steevens.*

[6] *What! a* knave *too?*] Timon had just called Apemantus *fool*, in consequence of what he had known of him by former acquaintance; but when Apemantus tells him, that he comes *to vex him*, Timon determines that to *vex* is either *the office of a villain or a fool;* that *to vex by design* is *villainy, to vex without design* is *folly.* He then properly asks Apemantus whether he takes delight in *vexing*, and when he answers, *yes*, Timon replies,—*What! a knave too?* I before only knew thee to be a *fool*, but now I find thee likewise a *knave.* *Johnson.*

[7] —— *is crown'd before:*] Arrives sooner at *high wish;* that is, at the *completion of its wishes.* *Johnson.*
So, in a former scene of this play:
"And in some sort these wants of mine are *crown'd*,
"That I account them blessings."
Again, more appositely, in *Cymbeline:*
"—— my supreme *crown* of *grief*." *Malone.*

[8] *Worse than the worst, content.*] Best states contentless have a wretched being, a being worse than that of the worst of states that are content. *Johnson.*

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Thou should'st desire to die, being miserable.
Tim. Not by his breath,[9] that is more miserable.
Thou art a slave, whom Fortune's tender arm
With favour never clasp'd; but bred a dog.[1]
Hadst thou, like us,[2] from our first swath,[3] proceeded

[9] —— *by his breath,*] It means, I believe, by his *counsel*, by his *direction*. *Johnson.*

By his breath, I believe, is meant his *sentence*. To *breathe* is as licentiously used by Shakspeare in the following instance from *Hamlet:*

"Having ever seen, in the prenominate crimes,
"The youth you *breathe* of, guilty," &c. *Steevens.*

By his *breath* means in our author's language, by his *voice* or *speech*, and so in fact by his sentence. Shakspeare frequently uses the word in this sense. It has been twice so used in this play. See p. 383, n. 4. *Malone.*

[1] —— *but bred a* dog.] Alluding to the word *Cynick*, of which sect Apemantus was. *Warburton.*

For the etymology of *Cynick*, our author was not obliged to have recourse to the Greek language. The dictionaries of his time furnished him with it. See Cawdrey's *Dictionary of hard English Words*, octavo, 1604: "CYNICAL, *Doggish*, froward." Again, in Bullokar's *English Expositor*, 1616: "CYNICAL, *Doggish*, or currish. There was in Greece an old sect of philosophers so called, because they did ever sharply *barke* at men's vices," &c. After all, however, I believe Shakspeare only meant, thou wert born in a low state, and used from thy infancy to hardships. *Malone.*

[2] *Hadst thou, like us,*] There is in this speech a sullen haughtiness, and malignant dignity, suitable at once to the lord and the man-hater. The impatience with which he bears to have his luxury reproached by one that never had luxury within his reach, is natural and graceful.

There is in a letter, written by the Earl of Essex, just before his execution, to another nobleman, a passage somewhat resembling this, with which, I believe, every reader will be pleased, though it is so serious and solemn that it can scarcely be inserted without irreverence:

"God grant your lordship may quickly feel the comfort I now enjoy in my unfeigned conversion, but that you may never feel the torments I have suffered for my long delaying it. *I had none but deceivers to call upon me, to whom I said, if my ambition could have entered into their narrow breasts, they would not have been so humble; or if my delights had been once tasted by them, they would not have been so precise. But your lordship hath one to call upon you, that knoweth what it is you now enjoy; and what the greatest fruit and end is of all contentment that this world can afford* Think, therefore, dear earl, that I have staked and buoyed all the ways of pleasure unto you, and left them as sea-marks for you to keep the channel

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The sweet degrees[4] that this brief world affords
To such as may the passive drugs of it[5]
Freely command,[6] thou would'st have plunged thyself
In general riot; melted down thy youth
In different beds of lust; and never learn'd
The icy precepts of respect,[7] but follow'd

of religious virtue. For shut your eyes never so long, they must be open at the last, and then you must say with me, *there is no peace to the ungodly.*" *Johnson.*

3 ——*first* swath,] From infancy. *Swath* is the dress of a new-born child. *Johnson.*

So, in Heywood's *Golden Age*, 1611:

"No more their cradles shall be made their tombs,
"Nor their soft *swaths* become their winding-sheets."

Again, in Chapman's translation of Homer's *Hymn to Apollo*:

"—— swaddled with sincere
"And spotless *swath*-bands; —." *Steevens.*

4 The *sweet degrees* —] Thus the folio. The modern editors have, without authority, read—*Through* &c. but this neglect of the preposition was common to many other writers of the age of Shakspeare. *Steevens.*

5 *To such as may the* passive drugs *of it* —] Though the modern editors agree in this reading, it appears to me corrupt. The epithet *passive* is seldom applied, except in a metaphorical sense, to inanimate objects; and I cannot well conceive what Timon can mean by the *passive drugs of the world*, unless he means *every thing that the world affords.*

But in the first folio the words are not "passive *drugs*," but "passive *drugges*." This leads us to the true reading—*drudges*, which improve the sense, and is nearer to the old reading in the trace of the letters.

Dr. Johnson says in his Dictionary, that a *drug* means a *drudge*, and cites this passage as an instance of it. But he is surely mistaken; and I think it is better to consider the passage as erroneous, than to acknowledge, on such slight authority, that a *drug* signifies a drudge. *M. Mason.*

6 ——*command*,] Old copy—*command'st*. Corrected by Mr. Rowe. *Malone.*

7 ——*precepts of respect*,] Of obedience to laws. *Johnson.*

Respect, I believe, means the *qu'en dira't on?* the regard of Athens, that strongest restraint on licentiousness: the *icy precepts*, i. e. that cool hot blood; what Mr. Burke, in his admirable *Reflections on the Revolution in France*, has emphatically styled "one of the greatest controuling powers on earth, the *sense of fame and estimation.*" *Steevens.*

Timon cannot mean by the word *respect*, obedience to the laws, as Johnson supposes; for a poor man is more likely to be im-

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The sugar'd game before thee. But myself,[8]
Who had the world as my confectionary;
The mouths, the tongues, the eyes, and hearts of men
At duty, more than I could frame employment;[9]
That numberless upon me stuck, as leaves
Do on the oak, have with one winter's brush
Fell from their boughs, and left me open, bare
For every storm that blows;—I, to bear this,
That never knew but better, is some burden:
Thy nature did commence in sufferance, time
Hath made thee hard in 't. Why should'st thou hate men?
They never flatter'd thee: What hast thou given?
If thou wilt curse,—thy father, that poor rag,[1]

pressed with a reverence for the laws, than one in a station of nobility and affluence. *Respect* may possibly mean, as Steevens supposes, a *regard* to the opinion of the world: but I think it has a more enlarged signification, and implies a consideration of consequences, whatever they may be. In this sense it is used by Hamlet:

"——— There 's the *respect*
"That makes calamity of so long life." *M. Mason.*

"The icy precepts of *respect*" mean the cold admonitions of *cautious prudence*, that deliberately weighs the consequences of every action. So, in *Troilus and Cressida:*

"——— Reason and *respect*
"Makes livers pale, and lustihood deject." *Malone:*

[8] ——*But myself,*] The connection here requires some attention. *But* is here used to denote opposition; but what immediately precedes is not opposed to that which follows. The adversative particle refers to the two first lines:

Thou art a slave, whom fortune's tender arm
With favour never clasp'd; but bred a dog.
——— *But myself,*
Who had the world as my confectionary; &c.

The intermediate lines are to be considered as a parenthesis of passion. *Johnson.*

[9] ——*than I could frame employment;*] i. e. frame employment *for*. Shakspeare frequently writes thus. *Malone.*

[1] ——*that poor* rag,] If we read—*poor rogue*, it will correspond rather better to what follows. *Johnson.*

In *King Richard III*, Margaret calls Gloster *rag* of honour; in the same play, the overweening *rags* of France are mentioned; and John Florio speaks of a "tara-*rag* player." *Steevens.*

We now use the word *ragamuffin* in the same sense.
M. Mason.

The term is yet used. The lowest of the people are yet dem-

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Must be thy subject; who, in spite, put stuff
To some she beggar, and compounded thee
Poor rogue hereditary. Hence! be gone!—
If thou hadst not been born the worst of men,
Thou hadst been a knave, and flatterer.[2]

Apem. Art thou proud yet?

Tim. Ay, that I am not thee.

Apem. I, that I was
No prodigal.

Tim. I, that I am one now;
Were all the wealth I have, shut up in thee,
I 'd give thee leave to hang it. Get thee gone.—
That the whole life of Athens were in this!
Thus would I eat it. [*Eating a Root.*

Apem. Here; I will mend thy feast.
[*Offering him something.*

Tim. First mend my company,[3] take away thyself.[4]

Apem. So I shall mend mine own, by the lack of thine.

minated—Tag, *rag*, &c. So, in *Julius Cæsar*: "— if the *tag-rag* people did not clap him and hiss him,—I am no true man." *Malone.*

[2] *Thou hadst been a* knave, *and flatterer.*] Dryden has quoted two verses of Virgil to show how well he could have written satires. Shakspeare has here given a specimen of the same power by a line bitter beyond all bitterness, in which Timon tells Apemantus, that he had not virtue enough for the vices which he condemns.

Dr. Warburton explains *worst* by *lowest*, which somewhat weakens the sense, and yet leaves it sufficiently vigorous.

I have heard Mr. Burke commend the subtilty of discrimination with which Shakspeare distinguishes the present character of Timon from that of Apemantus, whom to vulgar eyes he would now resemble. *Johnson.*

Knave is here to be understood of a man who endeavours to recommend himself by a hypocritical appearance of attention, and superfluity of fawning officiousness; such a one as is called in *King Lear*, a *finical superserviceable rogue*.—If he had had virtue enough to attain the profitable vices, he would have been profitably vicious. *Steevens.*

[3] *First mend* my *company*;] The old copy reads—*mend* thy *company*. The correction was made by Mr. Rowe. *Malone.*

[4] —— *take away thyself.*] This thought seems to have been adopted from Plutarch's *Life of Antony*. It stands thus in Sir Thomas North's translation: "Apemantus said unto the other, O, here is a trimme banket, *Timon*. *Timon* aunswered againe, yea, said he, *so thou wert not here*." *Steevens.*

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Tim. 'Tis not well mended so, it is but botch'd; If not, I would it were.

Apem. What would'st thou have to Athens?

Tim. Thee thither in a whirlwind. If thou wilt, Tell them there I have gold; look, so I have.

Apem. Here is no use for gold.

Tim. The best and truest; For here it sleeps, and does no hired harm.

Apem. Where ly'st o' nights, Timon?

Tim. Under that 's above me.[5] Where feed'st thou o' days, Apemantus?

Apem. Where my stomach finds meat; or, rather, where I eat it.

Tim. 'Would poison were obedient, and knew my mind!

Apem. Where would'st thou send it?

Tim. To sauce thy dishes.

Apem. The middle of humanity thou never knewest, but the extremity of both ends: When thou wast in thy gilt, and thy perfume, they mocked thee for too much curiosity;[6] in thy rags thou knowest none, but art despised for the contrary. There 's a medlar for thee, eat it.

Tim. On what I hate, I feed not.

Apem. Dost hate a medlar?

Tim. Ay, though it look like thee.[7]

[5] Apem. *Where ly'st o' nights, Timon?* Tim. *Under that 's above me.*] So, in *Coriolanus*: "3 *Serv.* Where dwell'st thou? "*Cor.* Under the canopy." *Steevens.*

[6] —— *for too much* curiosity;] i. e. for too much finical delicacy. The Oxford editor alters it to *courtesy*. *Warburton.*

Dr. Warburton has explained the word justly. So, in Jervas Markham's *English Arcadia*, 1606: "— for all those eye-charming graces, of which with such *curiosity* she had boasted." Again, in Hobby's translation of Castiglione's *Cortegiano*, 1556: "A waiting gentlewoman should flee *affection* or *curiosity*." *Curiosity* is here inserted as a synonyme to *affection*, which means *affectation*. *Curiosity* likewise seems to have meant *capriciousness*. Thus, in Greene's *Mamillia*, 1593: "Pharicles hath shewn me some curtesy, and I have not altogether requitted him with *curiosity*: he hath made some shew of love, and I have not wholly seemed to mislike." *Steevens.*

[7] *Ay, though it look like thee.*] Timon here supposes that an objection against hatred, which through the whole tenor of the conversation appears an argument for it. One would have expected him to have answered—

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Apem. An thou hadst hated medlers sooner, thou should'st have loved thyself better now. What man didst thou ever know unthrift, that was beloved after his means?

Tim. Who, without those means thou talkest of, didst thou ever know beloved?

Apem. Myself.

Tim. I understand thee; thou hadst some means to keep a dog.

Apem. What things in the world canst thou nearest compare to thy flatterers?

Tim. Women nearest; but men, men are the things themselves. What would'st thou do with the world, Apemantus, if it lay in thy power?

Apem. Give it the beasts, to be rid of the men.

Tim. Would'st thou have thyself fall in the confusion of men, and remain a beast with the beasts?

Apem. Ay, Timon.

Tim. A beastly ambition, which the gods grant thee to attain to! If thou wert the lion, the fox would beguile thee: if thou wert the lamb, the fox would eat thee: if thou wert the fox, the lion would suspect thee, when, peradventure, thou wert accused by the ass: if thou wert the ass, thy dulness would torment thee; and still thou livedst but as a breakfast to the wolf: if thou wert the wolf, thy greediness would afflict thee, and oft thou shouldst hazard thy life for thy dinner: wert thou the unicorn,[8] pride and wrath would confound thee, and make thine own self the conquest of thy fury: wert thou a bear, thou would'st be killed by the horse; wert thou a

Yes, *for it looks like thee.*
The old edition, which always gives the pronoun instead of the affirmative particle, has it—
I, *though it look like thee.*
Perhaps we should read:
I thought *it* look'd *like thee.* *Johnson.*

[8] ——*the unicorn,* &c.] The account given of the unicorn is this: that he and the lion being enemies by nature, as soon as the lion sees the unicorn he betakes himself to a tree: the unicorn in his fury, and with all the swiftness of his course, running at him, sticks his horn fast in the tree, and then the lion falls upon him and kills him. Gesner *Hist. Animal.* *Hanmer.*
See a note on *Julius Cæsar,* Vol. XIV, p. 41. *Steevens.*

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horse, thou would'st be seized by the leopard; wert thou a leopard, thou wert german to the lion,[9] and the spots of thy kindred were jurors on thy life: all thy safety were remotion;[1] and thy defence, absence. What beast could'st thou be, that were not subject to a beast? and what a beast art thou already, that seest not thy loss in transformation?

Apem. If thou could'st please me with speaking to me, thou might'st have hit upon it here: The commonwealth of Athens is become a forest of beasts.

Tim. How has the ass broke the wall, that thou art out of the city?

Apem. Yonder comes a poet, and a painter: The plague of company light upon thee! I will fear to catch it, and give way: When I know not what else to do, I 'll see thee again.

Tim. When there is nothing living but thee, thou shalt be welcome. I had rather be a beggar's dog, than Apemantus.

Apem. Thou art the cap of all the fools alive.[2]

Tim. 'Would thou wert clean enough to spit upon.

Apem. A plague on thee, thou art too bad to curse.[3]

Tim. All villains, that do stand by thee, are pure.

9 —— *thou wert german to the lion,*] This seems to be an allusion to Turkish policy:

"Bears, like the *Turk*, no brother near the throne." *Pope.*

1 —— *were* remotion;] i. e. removal from place to place. So, in *King Lear*:

"'Tis the *remotion* of the duke and her." *Steevens.*

Remotion means, I apprehend, not a frequent removal from place to place, but merely *remoteness*, the being placed at a distance from the lion. See Vol. VIII, p. 293, n. 9. *Malone.*

2 *Thou art the cap* &c.] The *top*, the *principal*. The remaining dialogue has more malignity than wit. *Johnson.*

Dr. Johnson's explication is, I think, right; but I believe our author had also the *fool's cap* in his thoughts. *Malone.*

In *All 's Well that Ends Well*, "the *cap* of the time," apparently means—the *foremost* in the fashion. *Steevens.*

3 Apem. *A plague on thee, thou art too bad to curse.*] Thus, the old copies, and, I think, rightly. Mr. Theobald, however, is of a contrary opinion; for, according to the present regulation, says he, Apemantus is "made to curse Timon, and immediately to subjoin that he was too bad to curse." He would therefore give the former part of the line to Timon. *Steevens.*

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Apem. There is no leprosy but what thou speak'st.
Tim. If I name thee.—
I 'll beat thee,—but I should infect my hands.
Apem. I would, my tongue could rot them off!
Tim. Away, thou issue of a mangy dog!
Choler does kill me, that thou art alive;
I swoon to see thee.
Apem. 'Would thou would'st burst!
Tim. Away,
Thou tedious rogue! I am sorry, I shall lose
A stone by thee. [*Throws a Stone at him.*
Apem. Beast!
Tim. Slave!
Apem. Toad!
Tim. Rogue, rogue, rogue!
[APEM. *retreats backward, as going.*
I am sick of this false world; and will love nought
But even the mere necessities upon it.
Then, Timon, presently prepare thy grave;
Lie where the light foam of the sea may beat
Thy grave-stone daily: make thine epitaph,
That death in me at others' lives may laugh.
O thou sweet king-killer, and dear divorce
[*Looking on the Gold.*
'Twixt natural son and sire![4] thou bright defiler
Of Hymen's purest bed! thou valiant Mars!
Thou ever young, fresh, lov'd, and delicate wooer,
Whose blush doth thaw the consecrated snow
That lies on Dian's lap! thou visible god,
That solder'st close impossibilities,
And mak'st them kiss! that speak'st with every tongue,
To every purpose! O thou touch of hearts!
Think, thy slave man rebels; and by thy virtue
Set them into confounding odds, that beasts
May have the world in empire!
Apem. 'Would 'twere so;—
But not till I am dead!—I 'll say, thou hast gold:
Thou will be throng'd to shortly.
Tim. Throng'd to?

4 'Twixt natural son and sire!]
"Διὰ τοῦτον ὐκ ἀδελφὸς
"Διὰ τοῦτον ὁ τοκῆς." *Anac. Johnson.*

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Apem. Ay.

Tim. Thy back, I pr'ythee.

Apem. Live, and love thy misery!

Tim. Long live so, and so die!—I am quit.—

[*Exit* APEM.

More things like men?[5]—Eat, Timon, and abhor them.

Enter Thieves.[6]

1 *Thief.* Where should he have this gold? It is some poor fragment, some slender ort of his remainder: The mere want of gold, and the falling-from of his friends, drove him into this melancholy.

him

2 *Thief.* It is noised, he hath a mass of treasure.

3 *Thief.* Let us make the assay upon him; if he care not for 't, he will supply us easily; If he covetously reserve it, how shall 's get it?

2 *Thief.* True; for he bears it not about him, 'tis hid.

1 *Thief.* Is not this he?

Thieves. Where?

2 *Thief.* 'Tis his description.

3 *Thief.* He; I know him.

Thieves. Save thee, Timon.

Tim. Now, thieves?

Thieves. Soldiers, not thieves.

Tim. Both too; and women's sons.

Thieves. We are not thieves, but men that much do want.

Tim. Your greatest want is, you want much of meat.[7]

[5] *More things like men?*] This line, in the old edition, is given to Apemantus, but it apparently belongs to Timon. Sir Thomas Hanmer has transposed the foregoing dialogue according to his own mind, not unskilfully, but with unwarrantable licence. *Johnson.*

I believe, as the name of Apemantus was prefixed to this line, instead of Timon, so the name of Timon was prefixed to the preceding line by a similar mistake. This line seems more proper in the mouth of Apemantus; and the words—*I am quit*, seem to mark his *exit*. *Malone.*

The words—*I am quit*, in my opinion, belong to *Timon*, who means that he is *quit* or clear, has at last got *rid* of Apemantus; is delivered from his company. This phrase is yet current among the vulgar. *Steevens.*

[6] *Enter* Thieves.] The old copy reads,—*Enter the* Banditti. *Steevens.*

[7] ——*you want much of* meat.] Thus both the player and poetical editor have given us this passage; quite *sand-blind*, as honest

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Why should you want? Behold, the earth hath roots;[8]
Within this mile break forth a hundred springs:
The oaks bear mast, the briars scarlet hips;
The bounteous huswife, nature, on each bush
Lays her full mess before you. Want? why want?

1 *Thief.* We cannot live on grass, on berries, water,
As beasts, and birds, and fishes.

Tim. Nor on the beasts themselves, the birds, and fishes;
You must eat men. Yet thanks I must you con,[9]

Launcelot says, to our author's meaning. If these poor Thieves wanted *meat*, what greater want could they be cursed with, as they could not live on grass, and berries, and water? but I dare warrant the poet wrote:

——*you much want of* meet.

i. e. Much of what you *ought to be;* much of the qualities *befitting* you as human creatures. *Theobald.*

Such is Mr. Theobald's emendation, in which he is followed by Dr. Warburton. Sir Thomas Hanmer reads:

——*you want much of* men.

They have been all busy without necessity. Observe the series of the conversation. The Thieves tell him, that they are *men that much do want.* Here is an ambiguity between *much want* and *want* of *much.* Timon takes it on the wrong side, and tells them that their *greatest want is,* that, like other men, *they want much of meat;* then telling them where meat may be had, he asks, *Want? why want? Johnson.*

Perhaps we should read:

Your greatest want is, you want much of me.

rejecting the two last letters of the word. The sense will then be—your greatest want is that you expect supplies of *me* from whom you can reasonably expect nothing. Your necessities are indeed desperate, when you apply for relief to one in my situation. Dr. Farmer, however, with no small probability, would point the passage as follows:

Your greatest want is, you want much. Of meat
Why should you want? Behold, &c. *Steevens.*

[8] —— *the earth hath roots;* &c.]

"Vile olus, & duris hærentia mora rubetis,
"Pugnantis stomachi composuere famem:
"Flumine vicino stultus sitit."

I do not suppose these to be imitations, but only to be similar thoughts on similar occasions. *Johnson.*

[9] —— *Yet* thanks *I must you* con,] To *con thanks* is a very common expression among our old dramatick writers. So, in *The Story of King Darius,* 1565, an interlude:

"Yea and well said, I *con you* no thanke."

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That you are thieves profess'd; that you work not
In holier shapes: for there is boundless theft
In limited professions.[1] Rascal thieves,
Here 's gold: Go, suck the subtle blood of the grape,
Till the high fever seeth your blood to froth,
And so 'scape hanging: trust not the physician;
His antidotes are poison, and he slays
More than you rob: take wealth and lives together;
Do villainy, do, since you profess to do 't,[2]
Like workmen. I 'll example you with thievery:
The sun 's a thief, and with his great attraction
Robs the vast sea: the moon 's an arrant thief,
And her pale fire she snatches from the sun:
The sea 's a thief, whose liquid surge resolves
The moon into salt tears:[3] the earth 's a thief,

Again, in *Pierce Pennilesse his Supplication to the Devil*, by Nash, 1592: "It is well done to practise my wit; but I believe our lord will *con thee little thanks* for it." *Steevens.*

1 *In* limited *professions,*] *Limited,* for legal. *Warburton.*
Regular, orderly, professions. So, in *Macbeth:*

"For 'tis my *limited* service."

i. e. my appointed service, prescribed by the necessary duty and *rules* of my office. *Malone.*

2 —— *since you* profess *to do 't,*] The old copy has—*protest.* The correction was made by Mr. Theobald. *Malone.*

3 *The sea 's a thief, whose liquid surge resolves*
The moon *into salt tears:*] The *moon* is supposed to be humid, and perhaps a source of humidity, but cannot be *resolved* by the *surges* of the sea. Yet I think *moon* is the true reading. Here is a circulation of thievery described: The sun, moon, and sea, all rob, and are robbed. *Johnson.*

He says simply, that the *sun*, the *moon*, and the *sea*, rob one another by turns, but the *earth* robs them all: the sea, i. e. *liquid surge*, by supplying the *moon* with moisture, robs her in turn of the *soft* tears of *dew* which the poets always fetch from this planet. *Soft* for *salt* is an easy change. In this sense Milton speaks of *her moist continent. Paradise Lost*, Book V, l. 422. And, in *Hamlet*, Horatio says:

"—— the *moist* star
"Upon whose influence Neptune's empire stands."

Steevens.

We are not to attend on such occasions merely to philosophical truth; we are to consider what might have been the received or vulgar notions of the time.—The populace, in the days of Shakspeare, might possibly have considered the waining of the moon as a gradual dissolution of it, and have attributed to this melting

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That feeds and breeds by a composture[4] stolen
From general excrement: each thing 's a thief;
The laws, your curb and whip, in their rough power
Have uncheck'd theft. Love not yourselves; away;
Rob one another. There 's more gold; Cut throats;
All that you meet are thieves: To Athens, go,
Break open shops; nothing can you steal,[5]
But thieves do lose it: Steal not less,[6] for this
I give you; and gold confound you howsoever!
Amen. [TIM. *retires to his Cave.*

3 *Thief.* He has almost charmed me from my profession, by persuading me to it.

1 *Thief.* 'Tis in the malice of mankind, that he thus advises us; not to have us thrive in our mystery.[7]

of the moon, the increase of the sea at the time she disappears. They might, it is true, be told, that there is a similar increase in the tides when the moon becomes full; but when popular notions are once established, the reasons urged against them are but little attended to. It may also be observed, that the moon, when viewed through a telescope, has a humid appearance, and seems to have drops of water suspended from the rim of it; to which circumstance Shakspeare probably alludes in *Macbeth*, where Hecate says:

"Upon the corner of the *moon*
"There hangs a *vaporous* drop," &c. *M. Mason.*

Shakspeare knew that the moon was the cause of the tides, [See *The Tempest*, Vol. II, p. 134,] and in that respect the liquid surge, that is, the waves of the sea, rising one upon another, in the progress of the tide, may be said to *resolve the moon into salt tears;* the moon, as the poet chooses to state the matter, losing some part of her humidity, and the accretion to the sea, in consequence of her tears, being the cause of the *liquid surge.* Add to this the popular notion, yet prevailing, of the moon's influence on the weather; which, together with what has been already stated, probably induced our author here and in other places to allude to the *watry* quality of that planet. In *Romeo and Juliet*, he speaks of her "*watry beams.*" *Malone.*

[4] —— *by a* composture —] i. e. composition, compost. *Steevens.*

[5] —— *nothing can you steal,*] To complete the measure I would read:

—— where *nothing can you steal,* —. *Steevens.*

[6] —— *Steal* not *less,*] *Not*, which was accidentally omitted in the old copy, was inserted by Mr. Rowe. *Malone.*

[7] *'Tis in the malice of mankind, that he thus advises us; not to have us thrive in our mystery.*] The reason of his advice, says the

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2 *Thief.* I 'll believe him as an enemy, and give over my trade.

1 *Thief.* Let us first see peace in Athens: There is no time so miserable, but a man may be true.[8]

[*Exeunt* Thieves.

Enter FLAVIUS.

Flav. O you gods!
Is yon despis'd and ruinous man my lord?
Full of decay and failing? O monument
And wonder of good deeds evilly bestow'd!
What an alteration of honour has
Desperate want made![9]
What viler thing upon the earth, than friends,
Who can bring noblest minds to basest ends!
How rarely[1] does it meet with this time's guise,
When man was wish'd to love his enemies:[2]
Grant, I may ever love, and rather woo
Those that would mischief me, than those that do![3]

Thief, is *malice to mankind,* not any kindness to us, or desire *to have us thrive in our mystery.* *Johnson.*

[8] *Let us first see peace in Athens: There is no time so miserable, but a man may be true.*] [Dr. Warburton divides this line between the two thieves.] This and the concluding little speech have in all the editions been placed to one speaker: But, it is evident, the latter words ought to be put in the mouth of the *second* Thief, who is repenting, and leaving off his trade. *Warburton.*

The second Thief has just said, he 'll give over his trade. It is time enough for that, says the first Thief: let us wait till Athens is at peace. There is no hour of a man's life so wretched, but he always has it in his power to become a *true,* i. e. an honest man. I have explained this easy passage, because it has, I think, been misunderstood.

Our author has made Mrs. Quickly utter nearly the same exhortation to the dying Falstaff: "— Now I bid him not think of God; *there was time enough* for that yet." *Malone.*

[9] *What an alteration of honour has*
Desperate want made!] *An alteration of honour,* is an *alteration* of an *honourable state* to a state of disgrace. *Johnson.*

[1] *How* rarely *does it meet* —] *Rarely* for fitly; not for seldom. *Warburton.*

How curiously; how happily. *Malone.*

[2] *When man was* wish'd *to love his enemies:*] We should read—*will'd.* He forgets his Pagan system here again. *Warburton.*

Wish'd is right. It means *recommended.* See Vol. VI, p. 38, n. 7. *Reed.*

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He has caught me in his eye: I will present
My honest grief unto him; and, as my lord,
Still serve him with my life.—My dearest master!

TIMON *comes forward from his Cave.*

Tim. Away! what art thou?

Flav. Have you forgot me, sir?

Tim. Why dost ask that? I have forgot all men;
Then, if thou grant'st thou 'rt man,[4] I have forgot thee.

Flav. An honest poor servant of yours.

Tim. Then
I know thee not: I ne'er had honest man
About me, I; all that[5] I kept were knaves,[6]
To serve in meat to villains.

Flav. The gods are witness,
Ne'er did poor steward wear a truer grief
For his undone lord, than mine eyes for you.

Tim. What, dost thou weep?—Come nearer;—then I love thee,
Because thou art a woman, and disclaim'st
Flinty mankind; whose eyes do never give,
But thorough lust, and laughter. Pity 's sleeping:[7]

[3] *Grant, I may ever love, and rather* woo
Those that would mischief me, than those that do!] It is plain, that in this whole speech *friends* and *enemies* are taken only for those who *profess friendship* and *profess enmity;* for the *friend* is supposed not to be more kind, but more dangerous than the *enemy.* The sense is, *Let me rather woo or caress those that* would *mischief, that* profess to mean me mischief, *than those* that really *do* me *mischief, under false professions of kindness.* The Spaniards, I think, have this proverb: *Defend me from my friends, and from my enemies I will defend myself.* This proverb is a sufficient comment on the passage. *Johnson.*

[4] —— *thou 'rt man,*] Old copy—*thou 'rt* a *man.* *Steevens.*

[5] —— *that*—] I have supplied this pronoun, for the metre's sake. *Steevens.*

[6] —— *knaves,*] *Knave* is here in the compound sense of a *servant* and a *rascal.* *Johnson.*

[7] —— *Pity's sleeping:*] I do not know that any correction is necessary, but I think we might read:

—— —— *eyes do never give,*
But thorough lust and laughter, pity *sleeping:* ——.

Eyes never flow (to *give* is to dissolve, as saline bodies in moist weather,) *but by lust* or *laughter,* undisturbed *by* emotions of *pity.* *Johnson.*

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Strange times, that weep with laughing, not with weeping!

Flav. I beg of you to know me, good my lord,
To accept my grief, and, whilst this poor wealth lasts,
To entertain me as your steward still.

Tim. Had I a steward so true, so just, and now
So comfortable? It almost turns
My dangerous nature wild.[8] Let me behold
Thy face.—Surely, this man was born of woman.—

Johnson certainly is right in reading—*Pity sleeping.* The following line proves it:

"*Alcib.* —— on thy low grave, on faults forgiven."
M. Mason.

—— *Pity's sleeping:*] So, in Daniel's second Sonnet, 1594:

"Waken her *sleeping pity* with your crying." *Malone.*

[8] ——— *It almost turns*
My dangerous nature wild.] i. e. It almost turns my dangerous nature to a dangerous nature; for, by *dangerous nature* is meant *wildness.* Shakspeare wrote:

It almost turns my dangerous nature mild.

i. e. It almost reconciles me again to mankind. For fear of that, he puts in a caution immediately after, that he makes an exception but for one man. To which the Oxford editor says, *rectè.*
Warburton.

This emendation is specious, but even this may be controverted. To *turn wild* is *to distract.* An appearance so unexpected, says Timon, *almost turns my savageness* to distraction. Accordingly he examines with nicety lest his phrenzy should deceive him:

"——— Let me behold
"Thy face.—Surely, this man was born of woman. —"

And to this suspected disorder of the mind he alludes:

"Perpetual-*sober* gods!"

Ye powers whose intellects are out of the reach of perturbation.
Johnson.

He who is so much disturbed as to have no command over his actions, and to be *dangerous* to all around him, is already distracted, and therefore it would be idle to talk of *turning* such "a dangerous nature wild:" it is wild already. Besides; the baseness and ingratitude of the world might very properly be mentioned as driving Timon into frenzy: (So, in *Antony and Cleopatra:*

"The *ingratitude* of this Seleucus does
"Even make me *wild.*")

but surely the kindness and fidelity of his Steward was more likely to soften and compose him; that is, to render his dangerous nature *mild.* I therefore strongly incline to Dr. Warburton's emendation. *Malone.*

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Forgive my general and exceptless rashness,
Perpetual-sober[9] gods! I do proclaim
One honest man,—mistake me not,—but one;
No more, I pray,—and he is a steward.—
How fain would I have hated all mankind,
And thou redeem'st thyself: But all, save thee,
I fell with curses.
Methinks, thou art more honest now, than wise;
For, by oppressing and betraying me,
Thou might'st have sooner got another service:
For many so arrive at second masters,
Upon their first lord's neck. But tell me true,
(For I must ever doubt, though ne'er so sure,)
Is not thy kindness subtle, covetous,
If not a usuring[1] kindness; and as rich men deal gifts,
Expecting in return twenty for one?

Flav. No, my most worthy master, in whose breast
Doubt and suspect, alas, are plac'd too late:
You should have fear'd false times, when you did feast
Suspect still comes where an estate is least.
That which I show, heaven knows, is merely love,
Duty and zeal to your unmatched mind,
Care of your food and living: and, believe it,
My most honour'd lord,
For any benefit that points to me,
Either in hope, or present, I 'd exchange
For this one wish, That you had power and wealth
To requite me, by making rich yourself.

Tim. Look thee, 'tis so!—Thou single honest man,

[9] *Perpetual-sober*—] Old copy, unmetrically—
You *perpetual* &c. *Steevens.*

[1] If not *a usuring*—] *If not* seems to have slipt in here, by an error of the press, from the preceding line. Both the sense and metre would be better without it. *Tyrwhitt.*

I do not see any need of change. Timon asks—*Has not thy kindness some covert design? Is it not proposed with a view to gain some* equivalent *in return, or rather to gain* a great deal more *than thou offerest? Is it not at least the offspring of avarice,* if not *of something worse, of usury?* In this there appears to me no difficulty. *Malone.*

My opinion most perfectly coincides with that of Mr. Tyrwhitt. The sense of the line, with or without the contested words, is nearly the same; yet, by the omission of them, the metre would become sufficiently regular. *Steevens.*

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Here, take:—the gods out of my misery
Have sent thee treasure. Go, live rich, and happy:
But thus condition'd; Thou shalt build from men;[2]
Hate all, curse all: show charity to none;
But let the famish'd flesh slide from the bone,
Ere thou relieve the beggar: give to dogs
What thou deny'st to men; let prisons swallow them,
Debts wither them:[3] Be men like blasted woods,
And may diseases lick up their false bloods!
And so, farewel, and thrive.

Flav. O, let me stay,
And comfort you, my master.

Tim. If thou hat'st
Curses, stay not; fly, whilst thou 'rt bless'd and free:
Ne'er see thou man, and let me ne'er see thee.

[*Exeunt severally.*

ACT V.....SCENE I.

The same. Before Timon's *Cave.*

Enter Poet *and* Painter;[4] Timon *behind, unseen.*

Pain. As I took note of the place, it cannot be far where he abides.

[2] ——*from men;*] Away from human habitations. *Johnson.*

[3] *Debts wither them:*] Old copy:
Debts wither them to nothing:——
I have omitted the redundant words, not only for the sake of metre, but because they are worthless. Our author has the same phrase in *Antony and Cleopatra:*
" Age cannot *wither* her, —." *Steevens.*

[4] *Enter* Poet *and* Painter;] The Poet and the Painter were within view when Apemantus parted from Timon, and might then have seen Timon, since Apemantus, standing by him could see them: But the scenes of the Thieves and Steward have passed before their arrival, and yet passed, as the drama is now conducted, within their view. It might be suspected, that some scenes are transposed, for all these difficulties would be removed by introducing the Poet and Painter first, and the thieves in this place. Yet I am afraid the scenes must keep their present order, for the Painter alludes to the Thieves when he says, *he likewise enriched poor straggling soldiers with great quantity.* This impropriety is now heightened by placing the Thieves in one Act, and the Poet and

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Poet. What 's to be thought of him? Does the rumour hold for true, that he is so full of gold?

Pain. Certain: Alcibiades reports it; Phrynia and Timandra had gold of him: he likewise enriched poor straggling soldiers with great quantity: 'Tis said, he gave unto his steward a mighty sum.

Poet. Then this breaking of his has been but a try for his friends.

Pain. Nothing else: you shall see him a palm in Athens again, and flourish[5] with the highest. Therefore, 'tis not amiss, we tender our loves to him, in this

Painter in another: but it must be remembered, that in the original edition this play it not divided into separate Acts, so that the present distribution is arbitrary, and may be changed if any convenience can be gained, or impropriety obviated by alteration. *Johnson.*

In the immediately preceding scene, Flavius, Timon's steward, has a conference with his master, and receives gold from him. Between this and the present scene, a single minute cannot be supposed to pass; and yet the Painter tells his companion:—*'Tis said he gave* his steward *a mighty sum.*—Where was it said? Why in Athens, whence, it must therefore seem, they are but newly come. Here then should be fixed the commencement of the fifth Act, in order to allow time for Flavius to return to the city, and for rumour to publish his adventure with Timon. But how are we in this case to account for Apemantus's announcing the approach of the Poet and Painter in the last scene of the preceding Act, and before the Thieves appear? It is possible, that when this play was abridged for representation, all between this passage, and the entrance of the Poet and Painter, may have been omitted by the players, and these words put into the mouth of Apemantus to introduce them; and that when it was published at large, the interpolation was unnoticed. Or, if we allow the Poet and Painter to see Apemantus, it may be conjectured that they did not think his presence necessary at their interview with Timon, and had therefore returned back into the city. *Ritson.*

I am afraid, many of the difficulties which the commentators on our author have employed their abilities to remove, arise from the negligence of Shakspeare himself, who appears to have been less attentive to the connection of his scenes, than a less hasty writer may be supposed to have been. On the present occasion I have changed the beginning of the Act. It is but justice to observe, that the same regulation has already been adopted by Mr. Capell. *Reed.*

[5] —— *a* palm — *and* flourish &c.] This allusion is scriptural, and occurs in *Psalm* xcii. 11: "The righteous shall *flourish* like a *palm*-tree." *Steevens.*

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supposed distress of his: it will show honestly in us; purse and is very likely to load our purposes with what they travel for, if it be a just and true report that goes of his having.

Poet. What have you now to present unto him?

Pain. Nothing at this time but my visitation: only I will promise him an excellent piece.

Poet. I must serve him so too; tell him of an intent that 's coming toward him.

Pain. Good as the best. Promising is the very air o' the time: it opens the eyes of expectation: performance is ever the duller for his act; and, but in the plainer and simpler kind of people, the deed of saying is quite out of use.[6] To promise is most courtly and fashionable: performance is a kind of will, or testament, which argues a great sickness in his judgment that makes it.

Tim. Excellent workman! Thou canst not paint a man so bad as is thyself.

Poet. I am thinking, what I shall say I have provided for him: It must be a personating of himself:[7] a satire against the softness of prosperity; with a discovery of the infinite flatteries, that follow youth and opulency.

Tim. Must thou needs stand for a villain in thine own work? Wilt thou whip thine own faults in other men? Do so, I have gold for thee.

Poet. Nay, let 's seek him:
Then do we sin against our own estate,
When we may profit meet, and come too late.

Pain. True;

[6] —— *the deed* of saying *is quite out of use.*] *The* doing *of that which we have* said *we would do, the accomplishment and performance of our promise, is, except among the lower classes of mankind, quite out of use.* So, in *King Lear:*

"—— In my true heart
"I find she names my very *deed of love.*"

Again, more appositely, in *Hamlet:*

"As he, in his peculiar act and force,
"May give his *saying deed.*"

Mr. Pope rejected the words—*of saying*, and the four following editors adopted his licentious regulation. *Malone.*

I claim the merit of having restored the old reading. *Steevens.*

[7] *It must be a* personating *of himself:*] *Personating*, for representing simply. For the subject of this projected satire was Timon's *case*, not his *person*. *Warburton.*

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When the day serves,[8] before black-corner'd night,[9]
Find what thou want'st by free and offer'd light.
Come.

Tim. I 'll meet you at the turn. What a god 's gold,
That he is worshipp'd in a baser temple,
Than where swine feed!
'Tis thou that rigg'st the bark, and plough'st the foam;
Settlest admired reverence in a slave:
To thee be worship! and thy saints for aye
Be crown'd with plagues, that thee alone obey!
'Fit I do meet them.[1] [*Advancing.*

Poet. Hail, worthy Timon!

Pain. Our late noble master.

Tim. Have I once liv'd to see two honest men?

Poet. Sir,
Having often of your open bounty tasted,
Hearing you were retir'd, your friends fall'n off,
Whose thankless natures—O abhorred spirits!
Not all the whips of heaven are large enough—
What! to you!
Whose star-like nobleness gave life and influence
To their whole being! I 'm rapt, and cannot cover
The monstrous bulk of this ingratitude
With any size of words.

Tim. Let it go naked, men may see 't the better:

[8] *When the day serves,* &c.] Theobald with some probability assigns these two lines to the Poet. *Malone.*

[9] —— *before* black-corner'd *night,*] An anonymous correspondent sent me this observation: "As the shadow of the earth's body, which is round, must be necessarily conical over the hemisphere which is opposite to the sun, should we not read *black-coned?* See *Paradise Lost,* Book IV."

To this observation I might add a sentence from Philemon Holland's translation of Pliny's *Natural History,* B. II: "Neither is the night any thing else but the shade of the earth. Now the figure of this shadow resembleth a pyramis pointed forward, or a top turned upside down."

I believe, nevertheless, that Shakspeare, by this expression, meant only, Night which is as obscure as a *dark corner.* In *Measure for Measure,* Lucio calls the Duke, "*a duke of dark corners.*" Mr. M. Mason proposes to read—"black-*crown'd* night;" another correspondent, "black-*cover'd* night." *Steevens.*

[1] '*Fit I* do *meet them.*] For the sake of harmony in this hemistich, I have supplied the auxiliary verb. *Steevens.*

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You, that are honest, by being what you are,
Make them best seen, and known.
Pain. He, and myself,
Have travell'd in the great shower of your gifts,
And sweetly felt it.
Tim. Ay, you are honest men.
Pain. We are hither come to offer you our service.
Tim. Most honest men! Why, how shall I requite you?
Can you eat roots, and drink cold water? no.
Both. What we can do, we 'll do, to do you service.
Tim. You are honest men: You have heard that I have gold;
I am sure, you have: speak truth: you are honest men.
Pain. So it is said, my noble lord: but therefore
Came not my friend, nor I.
Tim. Good honest men:—Thou draw'st a counterfeit[2]
Best in all Athens: thou art, indeed, the best;
Thou counterfeit'st most lively.
Pain. So, so, my lord.
Tim. Even so, sir, as I say:—And, for thy fiction, [*To the* Poet.
Why, thy verse swells with stuff so fine and smooth,
That thou art even natural in thine art.—
But, for all this, my honest-natur'd friends,
I must needs say, you have a little fault:
Marry, 'tis not monstrous in you; neither wish I,
You take much pains to mend.
Both. Beseech your honour,
To make it known to us.
Tim. You 'll take it ill.
Both. Most thankfully, my lord.
Tim. Will you, indeed?
Both. Doubt it not, worthy lord.
Tim. There 's ne'er a one of you but trusts a knave,
That mightily deceives you.
Both. Do we, my lord?
Tim. Ay, and you hear him cog, see him dissemble,

[2] ——*a* counterfeit—] It has been already observed, that a *portrait* was so called in our author's time:

"——What find I here?
"Fair Portia's *counterfeit!*" *Merchant of Venice. Steevens.*

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Know his gross patchery, love him, feed him,
Keep in your bosom: yet remain assur'd,
That he 's a made-up villain.[3]

Pain. I know none such, my lord.

Poet. Nor I.[4]

Tim. Look you, I love you well; I 'll give you gold,
Rid me these villains from your companies:
Hang them, or stab them, drown them in a draught,[5]
Confound them by some course, and come to me,
I 'll give you gold enough.

Both. Name them, my lord, let 's know them.

Tim. You that way, and you this, but two in company:[6]—

[3] —— *a* made-up *villain.*] That is, a villain that adopts qualities and characters not properly belonging to him; a hypocrite. *Johnson.*

A *made-up* villain, may mean a *complete*, a *finished* villain. *M. Mason.*

[4] *Nor I.*] As it may be supposed (perhaps I am repeating a remark already made on a similar occasion) that our author designed his Poet's address to be not less respectful than that of his Painter, he might originally have finished this defective verse, by writing:

Nor I, my lord. *Steevens.*

[5] —— *in a* draught,] That is, in the *jakes*. *Johnson.*

So, in Holinshed, Vol. II, p. 735: "—he was then sitting on a *draught*." *Steevens.*

[6] —— *but two in company:*] This is an imperfect sentence, and is to be supplied thus, *But two in company* spoils all. *Warburton.*

This passage is obscure. I think the meaning is this: *but two in company*, that is, stand apart, *let only two be together;* for even when each stands single there are two, he himself and a villain. *Johnson.*

This passage may receive some illustration from another in *The Two Gentlemen of Verona:* "My master is a kind of knave; but that 's all one, if he be but *one knave*." The sense is, each man is *a double villain*, i. e. a villain with more than a single share of guilt. See Dr. Farmer's note on the third Act of *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, &c. Again, in *Promos and Cassandra*, 1578: "Go, *and a knave with thee*." Again, in *The Storye of King Darius*, 1565, an interlude:

"—— if you needs will go away,
"Take *two knaves* with you by my faye."

There is a thought not unlike this in *The Scornful Lady* of Beaumont and Fletcher:—"Take to your chamber when you please, there goes a black one with you, lady." *Steevens.*

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Each man apart, all single and alone,
Yet an arch-villain keeps him company.
If, where thou art, two villains shall not be,
[*To the* Painter.
Come not near him.—If thou would'st not reside
[*To the* Poet.
But where one villain is, then him abandon.—
Hence! pack! there 's gold, ye came for gold, ye slaves:
You have done work for me, there 's payment:[7] Hence!
You are an alchymist, make gold of that:—
Out, rascal dogs! [*Exit, beating and driving them out.*

There are not two words more frequently mistaken for each other, in the printing of these plays, than *but* and *not*. I have no doubt but that mistake obtains in this passage, and that we should read it thus:

——not *two in company:*
Each man apart, ——. *M. Mason.*

You that way, and you this, but two in company:
Each man apart, all single, and alone,
Yet an arch-villain keeps him company.] The first of these lines has been rendered obscure by false pointing; that is, by connecting the words, "but two in company," with the subsequent line, instead of connecting them with the preceding hemistich. The second and third line are put in apposition with the first line, and are merely an illustration of the assertion contained in it. Do you (says Timon) go that way, and you this, and yet still *each* of you will have *two* in your company: each of you, though single and alone, will be *accompanied* by an arch-villain. Each man, being himself a villain, will *take a villain along with him*, and so each of you will have two in company. It is a mere quibble founded on the word *company*. See the former speech, in which Timon exhorts *each* of them to "hang or stab *the villain* in his *company*," i. e. himself. The passage quoted by Mr. Steevens from *Promos and Cassandra*, puts the meaning beyond a doubt. *Malone.*

[7] *You have* done *work* &c.] For the insertion of the word *done*, which, it is manifest, was omitted by the negligence of the compositor, I am answerable. Timon in this line addresses the Painter, whom he before called "excellent *workman*;" in the next the Poet. *Malone.*

I had rather read:

You 've work'd for me, there is your *payment: Hence!*
Steevens.

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SCENE II.

The same.

Enter FLAVIUS, *and Two* Senators.

Flav. It is in vain that you would speak with Timon;
For he is set so only to himself,
That nothing, but himself, which looks like man,
Is friendly with him.

1 *Sen.* Bring us to his cave:
It is our part, and promise to the Athenians,
To speak with Timon.

2 *Sen.* At all times alike
Men are not still the same: 'Twas time, and griefs,
That fram'd him thus: time, with his fairer hand,
Offering the fortunes of his former days,
The former man may make him: Bring us to him,
And chance it as it may.

Flav. Here is his cave.—
Peace and content be here! Lord Timon! Timon!
Look out, and speak to friends: The Athenians,
By two of their most reverend senate, greet thee:
Speak to them, noble Timon.

Enter TIMON.

Tim. Thou sun, that comfort'st, burn![8]—Speak, and be hang'd:
For each true word, a blister! and each false
Be as a caut'rizing[9] to the root o' the tongue,
Consuming it with speaking!

1 *Sen.* Worthy Timon,——

Tim. Of none but such as you, and you of Timon.

[8] *Thou sun, that comfort'st, burn!*] "Thine eyes," says King Lear to Regan, "do comfort, and not burn."
A similar wish occurs in *Antony and Cleopatra:*
"O, *sun*,
"*Burn* the great sphere thou mov'st in!" *Steevens.*

[9] —— *a* caut'rizing —] The old copy reads—*cantherizing;* the poet might have written, *cancering* *Steevens.*
To *cauterize* was a word of our author's time; being found in Bullokar's *English Expositor*, octavo, 1616, where it is explained, "To burn to a sore." It is the word of the old copy, with the *u* changed to an *n*, which has happened in almost every one of these plays. *Malone.*

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2 *Sen.* The senators of Athens greet thee, Timon.
Tim. I thank them; and would send them back the plague,
Could I but catch it for them.
1 *Sen.* O, forget
What we are sorry for ourselves in thee.
The senators, with one consent of love,[1]
Entreat thee back to Athens; who have thought
On special dignities, which vacant lie
For thy best use and wearing.
2 *Sen.* They confess,
Toward thee, forgetfulness too general, gross:
Which now the publick body,[2]—which doth seldom
Play the recanter,—feeling in itself
A lack of Timon's aid, hath sense withal
Of its own fall,[3] restraining aid to Timon;[4]
And send forth us, to make their sorrowed render,[5]

[1] —— *with one* consent *of love,*] With one united voice of affection. So, in Sternhold's translation of the 100th *Psalm:*

"With one *consent* let all the earth."

All our old writers spell the word improperly, *consent,* without regard to its etymology, *concentus. Malone.*

This sense of the word consent, or *concent,* was originally pointed out and ascertained in a note on the first scene of *The First Part of King Henry VI.* See Vol. X, p. 10, n. 4. *Steevens.*

[2] Which *now the publick body,*] Thus the old copy, ungrammatically certainly; but our author frequently thus begins a sentence, and concludes it without attending to what has gone before: for which perhaps the carelessness and ardour of colloquial language may be an apology. See Vol. II, p. 15, n. 4. So afterwards in the third scene of this Act:

"*Whom,* though in general part we were oppos'd,
"Yet our old love made a particular force,
"And made us speak like friends."

See also the Poet's last speech in p. 441.—Sir Thomas Hanmer and the subsequent editors read here more correctly—*And* now the publick body, &c. but by what oversight could *Which* be printed instead of *And? Malone.*

The mistake might have been that of the transcriber, not the printer. *Steevens.*

[3] *Of its own* fall,] The Athenians *had sense,* that is, felt the danger *of their own fall,* by the arms of Alcibiades. *Johnson.*

[4] —— restraining *aid to Timon;*] I think it should be *refraining* aid, that is, with-holding aid that should have been given *to* Timon. *Johnson.*

Where is the difference? To *restrain,* and to *refrain,* both mean to with-hold. *M. Mason.*

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Together with a recompense more fruitful
Than their offence can weigh down by the dram;[6]
Ay, even such heaps and sums of love and wealth,
As shall to thee blot out what wrongs were theirs,
And write in thee the figures of their love,
Ever to read them thine.

Tim. You witch me in it;
Surprize me to the very brink of tears:
Lend me a fool's heart, and a woman's eyes,
And I 'll beweep these comforts, worthy senators.

1 *Sen.* Therefore, so please thee to return with us,
And of our Athens (thine, and ours,) to take
The captainship, thou shalt be met with thanks,
Allow'd with absolute power,[7] and thy good name
Live with authority:—so soon we shall drive back
Of Alcibiades the approaches wild;
Who, like a boar too savage, doth root up[8]

[5] —— *sorrowed* render,] Thus the old copy. *Render* is *confession*. So, in *Cymbeline*, Act IV, sc. iv:

"—— may drive us to a *render*
"Where we have liv'd."

The modern editors read—*tender*. *Steevens.*

[6] *Than their offence can weigh down by the dram;*] This, which was in the former editions, can scarcely be right, and yet I know not whether my reading will be thought to rectify it. I take the meaning to be, We will give thee a recompense that our offences cannot outweigh, *heaps of wealth down by the dram*, or delivered according to the exactest measure. A little disorder may perhaps have happened in transcribing, which may be reformed by reading:

——— *Ay, ev'n such heaps,*
And sums of love and wealth, down by the dram,
As shall to thee ——. *Johnson.*

The speaker means, a recompense that shall more than counterpoise their offences, though weighed with the most scrupulous exactness. *M. Mason.*

A recompense so large, that the offence they have committed, though every dram of that offence should be put into the scale, cannot counterpoise it. The recompense will outweigh the offence, which, instead of *weighing down* the scale in which it is placed, will kick the beam. *Malone.*

[7] Allow'd *with absolute power,*] *Allowed* is *licensed, privileged, uncontrolled.* So of a buffoon, in *Love's Labour 's Lost*, it is said, that he is *allowed*, that is, at liberty to say what he will, a privileged scoffer. *Johnson.*

[8] —— *like a* boar *too* savage, *doth* root up —] This image might

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His country's peace.

2 *Sen.* And shakes his threat'ning sword
Against the walls of Athens.

1 *Sen.* Therefore, Timon,—

Tim. Well, sir, I will; therefore, I will, sir; Thus,—
If Alcibiades kill my countrymen,
Let Alcibiades know this of Timon,
That—Timon cares not. But if he sack fair Athens,
And take our goodly aged men by the beards,
Giving our holy virgins to the stain
Of contumelious, beastly, mad-brain'd war;
Then, let him know,—and, tell him, Timon speaks it,
In pity of our aged, and our youth,
I cannot choose but tell him, that—I care not,
And let him tak 't at worst; for their knives care not,
While you have throats to answer: for myself,
There 's not a whittle in the unruly camp,[9]
But I do prize it at my love, before
The reverend'st throat in Athens. So I leave you
To the protection of the prosperous gods,[1]
As thieves to keepers.

Flav. Stay not, all 's in vain.

Tim. Why, I was writing of my epitaph,
It will be seen to-morrow; My long sickness[2]

have been caught from *Psalm* lxxx, 13: "The *wild boar* out of the wood doth *root* it *up*," &c. *Steevens.*

[9] *There 's not a* whittle *in the unruly camp,*] A *whittle* is still in the midland counties the common name for a pocket clasp knife, such as children use. Chaucer speaks of a "Sheffield *thwittell.*" *Steevens.*

[1] —— *of the* prosperous *gods,*] I believe *prosperous* is used here with our poet's usual laxity, in an active, instead of a passive, sense: *the gods who are the authors of the prosperity of mankind.* So, in *Othello:*

"To my unfolding lend a *prosperous* ear."

I leave you, says Timon, to the protection of the gods, the great distributors of prosperity, that they may *so* keep and guard you, as jailors do thieves; i. e. for final punishment. *Malone.*

I do not see why the epithet—*prosperous*, may not be employed here with its common signification, and mean—the gods who are *prosperous in all their undertakings.* Our author, elsewhere, has *blessed* gods, *clear* gods, &c. *Steevens.*

[2] —— *My long sickness* —] The disease of life begins to promise me a period. *Johnson.*

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Of health, and living, now begins to mend,
And nothing brings me all things. Go, live still;
Be Alcibiades your plague, you his,
And last so long enough!

1 *Sen.* We speak in vain.

Tim. But yet I love my country; and am not
One that rejoices in the common wreck,
As common bruit[3] doth put it.

1 *Sen,* That 's well spoke.

Tim. Commend me to my loving countrymen, —

1 *Sen.* These words become your lips as they pass through them.

2 *Sen.* And enter in our ears, like great triúmphers
In their applauding gates.

Tim. Commend me to them;
And tell them, that, to ease them of their griefs,
Their fears of hostile strokes, their aches, losses,
Their pangs of love,[4] with other incident throes
That nature's fragile vessel doth sustain
In life's uncertain voyage, I will some kindness do them:[5]
I 'll teach them to prevent wild Alcibiades' wrath.

2 *Sen.* I like this well, he will return again.

Tim. I have a tree,[6] which grows here in my close,

[3] —— *bruit* —] i. e. report, rumour. *Steevens.*

[4] *Their pangs of love,* &c.] Compare this part of Timon's speech with part of the celebrated soliloquy in *Hamlet*. *Steevens.*

[5] —— *I will some kindness* &c.] i. e. I will do them some kindness, for such, elliptically considered, will be the sense of these words, independent of the supplemental—*do them*, which only serves to derange the metre, and is, I think, a certain interpolation. *Steevens.*

[6] *I have a tree,* &c.] Perhaps Shakspeare was indebted to Chaucer's *Wife of Bath's* Prologue, for this thought. He might, however, have found it in Painter's *Palace of Pleasure*, Tom. I, Nov. 28, as well as in several other places. *Steevens.*

Our author was indebted for this thought to Plutarch's *Life of Antony:* "It is reported of him also, that this Timon on a time, (the people being assembled in the market-place, about dispatch of some affaires,) got up into the pulpit for orations, where the orators commonly use to speake unto the people; and silence being made, everie man listening to hear what he would say, because it was a wonder to see him in that place, at length he began to speak in this manner: 'My lordes of Athens, I have a little yard in my house where there groweth a figge tree, on the which

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That mine own use invites me to cut down,
And shortly must I fell it; Tell my friends,
Tell Athens, in the sequence of degree,[7]
From high to low throughout, that whoso please
To stop affliction, let him take his haste,
Come hither, ere my tree hath felt the axe,
And hang himself:—I pray you, do my greeting.

Flav. Trouble him no further, thus you still shall find him.

Tim. Come not to me again: but say to Athens,
Timon hath made his everlasting mansion
Upon the beached verge of the salt flood;
Which once a day[8] with his embossed froth[9]
The turbulent surge shall cover; thither come,
And let my grave-stone be your oracle.—
Lips, let sour words go by, and language end:
What is amiss, plague and infection mend!
Graves only be men's works; and death, their gain!
Sun, hide thy beams! Timon hath done his reign.

[*Exit* TIM.

1 *Sen.* His discontents are unremoveably

many citizens have hanged themselves; and because I meane to make some building upon the place, I thought good to let you all understand it, that before the figge tree be cut downe, if any of you be desperate, you may there in time go hang yourselves." *Malone.*

[7] ——*in the sequence of degree,*] Methodically, from highest to lowest. *Johnson.*

[8] Which *once a day*—] Old copy—*Who*. For the correction [*whom*] I am answerable. *Whom* refers to Timon All the modern editors (following the second folio) read—*Which* once &c. *Malone.*

Which, in the second folio, (and I have followed it) is an apparent correction of—*Who*. Surely, it is the *everlasting mansion*, or the *beach* on which it stands, that our author meant to cover with the foam, and not the corpse of *Timon*. Thus we often say that the grave in a churchyard, and not the body within it, is trodden down by cattle, or overgrown with weeds. *Steevens.*

[9] ——e mbossed *froth*—] When a deer was run hard, and foamed at the mouth, he was said to be *embossed* See Vol. VI, p. 16, n 9. The thought is from Painter's *Palace of Pleasure*, Tom. I, Nov. 28. *Steevens.*

Embossed froth, is swollen froth; from *bosse*, Fr. a tumour. The term *embossed*, when applied to deer, is from *emboçar*, Span. to cast out of the mouth. *Malone.*

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Coupled to nature.

2 *Sen.* Our hope in him is dead: let us return,
And strain what other means is left unto us
In our dear peril.[1]

1 *Sen.* It requires swift foot. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.

The Walls of Athens.

Enter Two Senators, *and a* Messenger.

1 *Sen.* Thou hast painfully discover'd; are his files
As full as thy report?

Mess. I have spoke the least:
Besides, his expedition promises
Present approach.

2 *Sen.* We stand much hazard, if they bring not Timon.

Mess. I met a courier, one mine ancient friend;[2]—
Whom, though in general part we were oppos'd,
Yet our old love made a particular force,
And made us speak like friends:[3]—this man was riding

[1] *In our* dear *peril.*] So the folios, and rightly. The Oxford editor alters *dear* to *dread*, not knowing that *dear*, in the language of that time, signified *dread*, and is so used by Shakspeare in numberless places. *Warburton.*

Dear, in Shakspeare's language, is *dire, dreadful.* So, in *Hamlet:*

"Would I had met my *dearest* foe in heaven." *Malone.*

Dear may, in the present instance, signify *immediate*, or *imminent*. It is an enforcing epithet with not always a distinct meaning. To enumerate each of the seemingly various senses in which it may be supposed to have been used by our author, would at once fatigue the reader and myself.

In the following situations, however, it cannot signify either *dire* or *dreadful:*

"Consort with me in loud and *dear* petition."
Troilus and Cressida.

"———— Some *dear* cause
"Will in concealment wrap me up a while." *King Lear.*
Steevens.

[2] —— one *mine ancient friend;*] Mr. Upton would read—*once* mine ancient friend. *Steevens.*

[3] Whom, *though in general part we were oppos'd,*
Yet our old love made a particular force,
And made us speak *like friends:*] Our author, hurried away by

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From Alcibiades to Timon's cave,
With letters of entreaty, which imported
His fellowship i' the cause against your city,
In part for his sake mov'd.

Enter Senators *from* TIMON.

1 *Sen.* Here come our brothers.

3 *Sen.* No talk of Timon, nothing of him expect.—
The enemies' drum is heard, and fearful scouring
Doth choke the air with dust: In, and prepare;
Ours is the fall, I fear, our foes the snare. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV.

The Woods. Timon's *Cave, and a Tomb-stone seen.*

Enter a Soldier, *seeking* TIMON.

Sold. By all description this should be the place.
Who's here? speak, ho!—No answer?—What is this?
Timon is dead, who hath out-stretch'd his span:
Some beast rear'd this; there does not live a man.[4]

strong conceptions, and little attentive to minute accuracy, takes great liberties in the construction of sentences. Here he means, *Whom*, though we were on opposite sides in the publick cause, yet the force of our old affection wrought so much *upon*, as to make *him speak to me* as a friend. See Vol. XIII, p. 138, n. 5. *Malone.*

I am fully convinced that this and many other passages of our author to which similar remarks are annexed, have been irretrievably corrupted by transcribers or printers, and could not have proceeded, in their present state, from the pen of Shakspeare; for what we cannot understand in the closet, must have been wholly useless on the stage.—The awkward repetition of the verb—*made*, very strongly countenances my present observation. *Steevens.*

[4] *Some beast* rear'd *this; there does not live a man.*] [Old copy—*read* this.] Some beast *read* what? The soldier had yet only seen the rude pile of earth heaped up for Timon's grave, and not the *inscription* upon it. We should read:

Some beast rear'd *this;* ——.

The soldier seeking, by order, for Timon, sees such an irregular mole, as he concludes must have been the workmanship of some beast inhabiting the woods; and such a cavity as must either have been so over-arched, or happened by the casual falling in of the ground. *Warburton.*

"The soldier (says Theobald) had *yet* only seen the rude pile of earth heaped up for Timon's grave, and not the *inscriptio*:

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Dead, sure; and this his grave.—

upon it." In support of his emendation, which was suggested to him by Dr. Warburton, he quotes these lines from Fletcher's *Cupid's Revenge:*

"Here is no food, nor beds: nor any *house*
"Built by a better architect than *beasts*." *Malone.*

Notwithstanding this remark, I believe the old reading to be the right. *The soldier had only seen the rude heap of earth.* He had evidently seen something that told him *Timon was dead;* and what could tell that but his tomb? The tomb he sees and the inscription upon it, which not being able to read, and finding none to read it for him, he exclaims peevishly, *some beast read this,* for it must be read, and in this place it cannot be read by man.

There is something elaborately unskilful in the contrivance of sending a soldier, who cannot read, to take the epitaph in wax, only that it may close the play by being read with more solemnity in the last scene. *Johnson.*

It is evident, that the soldier, when he first sees the heap of earth, does not know it to be a *tomb.* He concludes Timon must be dead, because he receives *no answer.* It is likewise evident, that when he utters the words *some beast,* &c. he has *not* seen the inscription. And Dr. Warburton's emendation is therefore, not only just and happy, but absolutely necessary. *What can this heap of earth be?* says the soldier; *Timon is certainly dead: some beast must have* erected *this, for here does not live a man to do it. Yes, he is dead, sure enough,* and this must be his grave. What is this writing upon it? *Ritson.*

I am now convinced that the emendation made by Mr. Theobald is right, and that it ought to be admitted into the text:—Some beast *rear'd* this. Our poet certainly would not make the soldier call on a beast to read the inscription, *before* he had informed the audience that he could not read it himself; which he does *afterwards.*

Besides; from the time he asks, "What is this?" "i. e. what is this cave, tomb, &c. not what is this *inscription?*" to the words, "What 's on this tomb,"—the observation evidently relates to Timon himself, and his grave; whereas, by the erroneous reading of the old copy, "Some beast *read* this,"—the soldier is first made to call on a beast to read the inscription, without assigning any reason for so extraordinary a requisition;—then to talk of Timon's death and of his grave; and, at last, to inform the audience that he cannot read the inscription. Let me add, that a beast being as unable to read as the soldier, it would be absurd to call on one for assistance; whilst on the other hand, if a den or cave, or any rude heap of earth resembling a tomb, be found where *there does not live a man,* it is manifest that it must have been formed by a beast.

A passage in *King Lear* also adds support to the emendation:

"——— ——— this hard *house,*
"More hard than are the stones whereof 'tis *rais'd.*" *Malone.*

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What 's on this tomb I cannot read; the character
I 'll take with wax:
Our captain hath in every figure skill;
An ag'd interpreter, though young in days:
Before proud Athens he 's set down by this,
Whose fall the mark of his ambition is. [*Exit.*

SCENE V.

Before the Walls of Athens.

Trumpets sound. Enter ALCIBIADES, *and Forces.*

Alcib. Sound to this coward and lascivious town
Our terrible approach. [*A Parley sounded.*

Enter Senators *on the Walls.*

Till now you have gone on, and fill'd the time
With all licentious measure, making your wills
The scope of justice; till now, myself, and such
As slept within the shadow of your power,
Have wander'd with our travers'd arms,[5] and breath'd
Our sufferance vainly: Now the time is flush,[6]
When crouching marrow, in the bearer strong,
Cries, of itself, *No more*:[7] now breathless wrong
Shall sit and pant in your great chairs of ease;

The foregoing observations are acute in the extreme, and I have not scrupled to adopt the reading they recommend. *Steevens.*

[5] —— travers'd *arms*,] Arms across. *Johnson.*
The same image occurs in *The Tempest:*
" His *arms* in this sad *knot*. *Steevens.*

[6] —— *the time is* flush,] A bird is *flush* when his feathers are grown, and he can leave the nest. *Flush* is *mature*. *Johnson.*

[7] *When crouching marrow, in the bearer strong,*
Cries, of itself, No more:] The marrow was supposed to be the original of strength. The image is from a camel kneeling to take up his load, who rises immediately when he finds he has as much laid on as he can bear. *Warburton.*
Pliny says, that the camel will not carry more than his accustomed and usual load. Holland's translation, B. VIII, c. xviii. *Reed.*
The image may as justly be said to be taken from a porter or coal-heaver, who when there is as much laid upon his shoulders as he can bear, will certainly cry, *no more*. *Malone.*
I wish the reader may not find himself affected in the same manner by our commentaries, and often concur in a similar exclamation. *Steevens.*

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And pursy insolence shall break his wind,
With fear, and horrid flight.

1 *Sen.* Noble, and young,
When thy first griefs were but a mere conceit,
Ere thou hadst power, or we had cause of fear,
We sent to thee; to give thy rages balm,
To wipe out our ingratitude with loves
Above their quantity.[8]

2 *Sen.* So did we woo
Transformed Timon to our city's love,
By humble message, and by promis'd means;[9]
We were not all unkind, nor all deserve
The common stroke of war.

1 *Sen.* These walls of ours
Were not erected by their hands, from whom
You have receiv'd your griefs:[1] nor are they such,
That these great towers, trophies, and schools should fall
For private faults in them.[2]

2 *Sen.* Nor are they living,
Who were the motives that you first went out;[3]

[8] *Above* their *quantity.*] *Their* refers to *rages* *Warburton.*

Their refers to *griefs.* "To give thy rages balm," must be considered as parenthetical. The modern editors have substituted *ingratitudes* for *ingratitude.* *Malone.*

[9] *So did we woo*
Transformed Timon to our city's love,
By humble message, and by promis'd means;] *Promis'd means* must import the recruiting of his sunk fortunes; but this is not all The senate had wooed him with humble message, and promise of general reparation. This seems included in the slight change which I have made:

——— *and by promis'd* mends. *Theobald.*

Dr. Warburton agrees with Mr. Theobald, but the old reading may as well stand. *Johnson.*

By promis'd means, is my promising him a competent subsistence. So, in *King Henry IV*, P. II: "Your *means* are very slender, and your waste is great." *Malone.*

[1] *You have receiv'd your* griefs:] The old copy has—*grief;* but as the Senator in his preceding speech uses the plural, *grief* was probably here an error of the press. The correction was made by Mr. Theobald. *Malone.*

[2] *For private faults in* them.] That is, in the persons from whom you have received your griefs. *Malone.*

[3] ——*the* motives *that you first went out;*] i. e. those who made

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Shame, that they wanted cunning, in excess
Hath broke their hearts.[4] March, noble lord,
Into our city with thy banners spread:
By decimation, and a tithed death,
(If thy revenges hunger for that food,
Which nature loaths,) take thou the destin'd tenth;
And by the hazard of the spotted die,
Let die the spotted.

1 *Sen.* All have not offended;
For those that were, it is not square,[5] to take,
On those that are, revenges:[6] crimes, like lands,
Are not inherited. Then, dear countryman,
Bring in thy ranks, but leave without thy rage:
Spare thy Athenian cradle,[7] and those kin,
Which, in the bluster of thy wrath, must fall
With those that have offended: like a shepherd,
Approach the fold, and cull the infected forth,
But kill not all together.[8]

the motion for your exile. This word is as perversely employed in *Troilus and Cressida:*

"——— her wanton spirits look out
"At every joint and *motive* of her body." *Steevens.*

[4] *Shame, that they wanted* cunning, *in excess*
Hath broke their hearts.] Shame in excess (i. e. extremity of shame) that they wanted cunning (i. e. that they were not wise enough not to banish you) hath broke their hearts. *Theobald*

I have no wish to disturb the manes of Theobald, yet think some emendation may be offered that will make the construction less harsh, and the sentence more serious. I read:

Shame that they wanted, coming *in excess,*
Hath broke their hearts.

Shame which they had so long *wanted, at last* coming in *its utmost* excess. *Johnson.*

I think that Theobald has, on this occasion, the advantage of Johnson When the old reading is clear and intelligible, we should not have recourse to correction.—*Cunning* was not, in Shakspeare's time, confined to a bad sense, but was used to express knowledge or understanding. *M. Mason.*

[5] ——*not square,*] Not regular, not equitable. *Johnson.*

[6] ——*revenges:*] Old copy—*revenge.* Corrected by Mr. Steevens. See the preceding speech. *Malone.*

[7] ——*thy* Athenian cradle,] Thus Ovid, *Met.* VIII, 99:
"—— Jovis incunabula Crete." *Steevens.*

[8] *But kill not* all together.] The old copy reads—*altogether.* Mr. M. Mason suggested the correction I have made. *Steevens.*

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2 *Sen.* What thou wilt,
Thou rather shalt enforce it with thy smile,
Than hew to 't with thy sword.
1 *Sen.* Set but thy foot
Against our rampir'd gates, and they shall ope;
So thou wilt send thy gentle heart before,
To say, thou 'lt enter friendly.
2 *Sen.* Throw thy glove,
Or any token of thine honour else,
That thou wilt use the wars as thy redress,
And not as our confusion, all thy powers
Shall make their harbour in our town, till we
Have seal'd thy full desire.
Alcib. Then there 's my glove;
Descend, and open your uncharged ports:[9]
Those enemies of Timon's, and mine own,
Whom you yourselves shall set out for reproof,
Fall, and no more: and,—to atone your fears
With my more noble meaning,[1]—not a man
Shall pass his quarter,[2] or offend the stream
Of regular justice in your city's bounds,
But shall be remedied,[3] to your publick laws

9 —— uncharged *ports:*] That is, *unguarded* gates. *Johnson.*
So, in *King Henry IV*, Part II:
"That keep'st the *ports* of slumber open wide." *Steevens.*
Uncharged means *unattacked*, not *unguarded*. *M. Mason.*
Mr. M. Mason is right. So, in Shakspeare's 70th Sonnet:
"Thou hast pass'd by the ambush of young days,
"Either not assail'd, or victor, being *charg'd*." *Malone.*

1 —— *to* atone *your fears*
With my more noble meaning,] i. e. to *reconcile* them to it. So, in *Cymbeline:* "I was glad I did *atone* my countryman and you." *Steevens.*

2 —— *not a man*
Shall pass his quarter,] Not a soldier shall quit his station, or be let loose upon you; and, if any commits violence, he shall answer it regularly to the law. *Johnson.*

3 *But shall be* remedied,] The construction is, But he shall be remedied; but Shakspeare means, that his offence shall be remedied, the word offence being included in *offend* in a former line. The editor of the second folio, for *to*, in the last line but one of this speech, substituted *by*, which all the subsequent editors adopted. *Malone.*
I profess my inability to extract any determinate sense from these words as they stand, and rather suppose the reading in the

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At heaviest answer.

Both. 'Tis most nobly spoken.

Alcib. Descend, and keep your words.[4]

The Senators *descend, and open the Gates.*

Enter a Soldier.

Sold. My noble general, Timon is dead;
Entomb'd upon the very hem o' the sea:
And, on his grave-stone, this insculpture; which
With wax I brought away, whose soft impression
Interprets for my poor ignorance.[5]

Alcib. [reads] *Here lies a wretched corse, of wretched soul bereft:*
Seek not my name: A plague consume you wicked caitiffs left![6]
Here lie I Timon; who, alive, all living men did hate:
Pass by, and curse thy fill; but pass, and stay not here thy gait.

These well express in thee thy latter spirits:
Though thou abhorr'dst in us our human griefs,
Scorn'dst our brain's flow,[7] and those our droplets which

second folio to be the true one. To be remedied *by*, affords a glimpse of meaning: to be remedied *to*, is "the blanket of the dark." *Steevens.*

[4] Descend, *and keep your words.*] Old copy—*Defend.* Corrected by the editor of the second folio. *Malone.*

[5] ——*for my* poor *ignorance.*] *Poor* is here used as a dissyllable, as *door* is in *The Merchant of Venice.* *Malone.*

[6] ——*caitiffs left!*] This epitaph is found in Sir T. North's translation of Plutarch, with the difference of one word only, viz. *wretches* instead of *caitiffs.* *Steevens.*

This epitaph is formed out of two distinct epitaphs which Shakspeare found in Plutarch. The first couplet is said by Plutarch to have been composed by Timon himself as his epitaph; the second to have been written by the poet Callimachus.

Perhaps the slight variation mentioned by Mr Steevens, arose from our author's having another epitaph before him, which is found in Kendal's *Flowers of Epigrammes*, 1577, and in Painter's *Palace of Pleasure*, Vol. I, Nov 28:

"TIMON HIS EPITAPHE.

"My wretched *caitiffe* daies expired now and past,
"My carren corps enterred here, is graspt in ground,
"In weltring waves of swelling seas by sourges caste;
"My name if thou desire, the gods thee doe confound!"

Malone.

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From niggard nature fall, yet rich conceit
Taught thee to make vast Neptune weep for aye
On thy low grave, on faults forgiven.[8] Dead
Is noble Timon; of whose memory
Hereafter more.—Bring me into your city,
And I will use the olive with my sword:
Make war breed peace; make peace stint war;[9] make each

[7] —— *our* brain's *flow*,] Sir Thomas Hanmer and Dr. Warburton read,—*brine's* flow. *Our brains flow* is *our tears;* but we may read, *our* brine's *flow*, our *salt tears*. Either will serve. *Johnson.*

Our brain's *flow* is right. So, in *Sir Giles Goosecap*, 1606:

"I shed not the tears of my *brain*"

Again, in *The Miracles of Moses*, by Drayton:

"But he from *rocks* that fountains can command,
"Cannot yet stay the *fountains of his brain*." *Steevens.*

[8] —— on *faults forgiven*.] Alcibiades's whole speech is in breaks, betwixt his reflections on Timon's death, and his addresses to the Athenian Senators: and as soon as he has commented on the place of Timon's grave, he bids the Senate set forward; tells 'em, he has forgiven their faults; and promises to use them with mercy. *Theobald.*

I suspect that we ought to read

—— One *fault 's forgiven.—Dead*
Is noble Timon; &c.

One fault (viz. the ingratitude of the Athenians to Timon) is forgiven, i. e. exempted from punishment by the death of the injured person. *Tyrwhitt.*

The old reading and punctuation appear to me sufficiently intelligible. Mr. Theobald asks, "why should Neptune weep over Timon's faults, or indeed what fault had he committed?" The faults that Timon committed, were, 1 that boundless prodigality which his Steward so forcibly describes and laments; and 2. his becoming a *Misanthrope*, and abjuring the society of all men for the crimes of a few.—Theobald supposes that Alcibiades bids the Senate set forward, assuring them at the same time that he forgives the wrongs they have done him. *On:—Faults forgiven* But how unlikely is it, that he should desert the subject immediately before him, and enter upon another quite different subject, in these three words; and then return to Timon again? to say nothing of the strangeness of the phrase—*faults forgiven*, for "faults *are* forgiven." *Malone.*

[9] —— stint *war;*] i. e. stop it. So, in Spenser's *Fairy Queen:*

"—— 'gan the cunning thief
"Persuade us die, to *stint* all further strife." *Steevens.*

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Prescribe to other, as each other's leech.[1]—
Let our drums strike. [*Exeunt.*[2]

[1] —— *leech.*] i. e. physician. So, in Spenser's *Fairy Queen:*
"Her words prevail'd, and then the learned *leech*
"His cunning hand 'gan to his wounds to lay ——."
Steevens.

[2] The play of *Timon* is a domestick tragedy, and therefore strongly fastens on the attention of the reader. In the plan there is not much art, but the incidents are natural, and the characters various and exact. The catastrophe affords a very powerful warning against that ostentatious liberality, which scatters bounty, but confers no benefits, and buys flattery, but not friendship.

In this tragedy, are many passages perplexed, obscure, and probably corrupt, which I have endeavoured to rectify, or explain with due diligence; but having only one copy, cannot promise myself that my endeavours shall be much applauded.
Johnson.

This play was altered by Shadwell, and brought upon the stage in 1678. In the *modest* title-page he calls it *Timon of Athens, or the Man-hater, as it is acted at the Duke's Theatre,* made *into a Play.*
Steevens.

END OF VOL. XV.

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